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**A Guide To USDA
and Other Federal Resources
for
Sustainable Agriculture
and Forestry Enterprises**



Adding value to agriculture and forestry through new and alternative enterprises and supporting sustainable agriculture through conservation, credit, and community development

May 1998

**United States
Department of
Agriculture**



National Agricultural Library

A Guide to USDA and Other Federal Resources for Sustainable Agriculture and Forestry Enterprises

Adding value to agriculture and forestry through new and alternative enterprises and supporting sustainable agriculture through conservation, credit, and community development

A publication of the U.S. Department of Agriculture agencies
working together for sustainable rural development

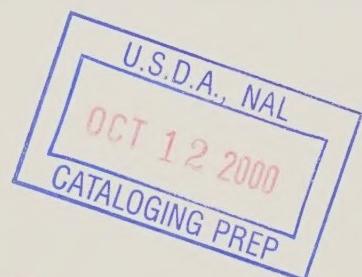
in collaboration with

The Michael Fields Agricultural Institute

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Table of Contents

Introduction	8
I. Research, Information and New Technologies	13
Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)	14
Cooperative Extension Service (CES)	16
Forest Products Conservation and Recycling (FPC&R)	18
Forest Products Laboratory (FPL)	20
Fund for Rural America (FRA)	22
National Agroforestry Center (NAC)	24
National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program (NRICGP)	26
Pest Management Alternatives Research Program	29
Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP)	31
Regional Integrated Pest Management Program	33
Science To Achieve Results (STAR)	35
Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program	37
Technology Transfer Program	40
Wood in Transportation (WIT) Program	43
<i>Also see:</i>	
<i>Alternative Agriculture Research and Commercialization Corporation</i>	46
<i>Cooperative Services</i>	72
<i>The Forest Service's Economic Recovery Program</i>	125
<i>The Forest Service's Rural Development Program</i>	133
<i>Urban and Community Forestry</i>	138
II. Financing Businesses and New Enterprises	45
Alternative Agriculture Research and Commercialization Corp. (AARC)	46
Business and Industrial (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program	48
Business and Industrial Direct Loan (Direct B&I) Program	50
Direct Farm Ownership and Operating Loans	52
Guaranteed Farm Ownership and Operating Loans	54
Intermediary Relending Loan Program (IRP)	56
Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG)	58
Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG)	60
Introduction to the U.S. Small Business Administration	62
Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR)	63
7(a) Loan Guaranty Program	65
504 Certified Development Company (504 CDC) Program (SBA)	67

MicroLoan Program	69
Small Business Investment Companies (SBICs)	70
<i>Also see:</i>	
<i>Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants</i>	<i>137</i>
 III. Management Assistance	 71
Cooperative Services (CS)	72
Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program (RCDG)	74
The Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)	76
Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Program	77
Small Farmer Outreach Training and Technical Assistance Program.....	79
<i>Also see:</i>	
<i>Intermediary Relending Loan Program</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>Rural Business Enterprise Grants</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>Rural Business Opportunity Grants</i>	<i>60</i>
 IV. Marketing Assistance.....	 81
Cooperative Value-Added Program	82
Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP)	83
Foreign Market Development Program (FMD)	85
Market Access Program (MAP).....	87
National Organic Program	89
Research and Promotion Program R&P)	90
Wholesale and Alternative Markets Program (W&AM).....	92
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)	95
<i>Also see:</i>	
<i>Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Forest Products Conservation and Recycling</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Cooperative Services</i>	<i>72</i>
<i>Communities Facilities Loan Program</i>	<i>121</i>
 V. Conservation and Resource Management	 97
Conservation Farm Option (CFO)	98
Conservation Reserve Program	100
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	102
Farmland Protection Program	104
Forestry Incentives Program (FIP)	106
Forest Legacy Program	108
Partners for Wildlife	110
Sustainable Development Challenge Grant Program (SDCG)	112
Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)	114

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)	116
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VI. Community Development 118

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)	119
Community Facilities Loan Program	121
Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program	123
The Forest Service's Economic Recovery Program	125
Environmental Justice Community/University Partnership Grants Program	127
Environmental Justice Small Grants Program	129
Environmental Justice Through Pollution Prevention Grant Funds (EJP2)	131
The Forest Service's Rural Development Program	133
Resource Conservation and Development (RC& D)	135
Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants (REDLG)	137
Urban and Community Forestry	138

Also see:

<i>Alternative Agriculture Research and Commercialization (AARC) Corp.</i>	46
<i>Rural Business Enterprise Grants</i>	58
<i>Rural Business Opportunity Grants</i>	60
<i>Small Farmers Outreach Training and Technical Assistance Program</i>	79
<i>Sustainable Development Challenge Grant Program</i>	112

VII. Additional Resources 140

Animal Damage Control (ADC)	141
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)	142
Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant (DLT) Program	143
Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)	144
Farm*A*Syst and Home*A*Syst	145
National Center for Integrated Pest Management	146
National Sheep Industry Improvement Center	147
Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program Grants	148
Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) and Veterinary Services (VS)	149
Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA)	150
Rural Venture Capital Demonstration Program	151
USDA/CSREES' Small Farm Program	152
State Revolving Loan Fund (SRLF)	153

VII. General Information Sources 154

The Consumer Information Center and Catalog	155
National Agricultural Library Information Resource Centers	156
U. S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development State Offices	157

INTRODUCTION

Guide to This Guide

Who Should Use the Guide?

This guide is written for anyone seeking the help of federal programs to foster innovative enterprises in agriculture and forestry in the United States. Specifically, the guide addresses program resources in value-added and diversified agriculture and forestry; sustainable land management; and community development. Thus, it can help farmers, entrepreneurs, community developers, conservationists, and many other individuals, as well as private and public organizations, both for-profit and not-for-profit. The guide also aims to help USDA and other agency employees become aware of and take better advantage of the enormous array of federal programs and resources available to their customers in supporting agricultural and forestry innovations.

How Can the Guide Help You?

We hope to introduce you to programs that can be useful to your work, including some you might not have thought to pursue otherwise. We have included descriptions of federal programs or resources that may create opportunities or provide assistance in adding value, diversifying, or adopting more sustainable practices in agricultural and forest product enterprises. Along with a general overview of each resource, the guide explains what each program can offer and, whenever possible, gives specific examples of how the program has actually been used to support such work.

How is the Guide Organized?

The guide is organized by the type of assistance and resources that federal programs offer to support agricultural and forestry innovations. These include resources in the categories of research and information; financing; business management; marketing; land and resource management; and community development. Programs are often represented in more than one category, such as when a program offers assistance pertaining both to research and community development, for example. When this occurs, the program is fully described in the section where it is first relevant and is referenced in future sections. Additional programs, whose relevance may be limited to a small segment of the guide's intended audience, can be found in a special section at the end.

Programs have been included in this guide based on their offering significant funding or technical assistance to support agricultural and forestry innovations, particularly innovations related to value-added and diversified enterprises; sustainable land and resource management; and community development.

In choosing the programs in the guide, we sought suggestions of many people in the communities this guide is designed to serve. But undoubtedly some relevant programs escaped our attention. Further, although these program descriptions are accurate as of this printing, we expect that aspects of some programs will change. Please check programs' Internet websites, when available, for program updates and applications. If you want to suggest additional programs to be included in any later editions or updates that might be published, or if you have other comments regarding the contents of this guide, please contact Margaret Krome, Agricultural Policy Coordinator for the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, 2524 Chamberlain Ave., Madison, WI 53705 (608) 238-1440, fax 238-1569, e-mail: mkrome@inxpress.net.

Why Address Innovations?

Both agriculture and forestry are industries going through enormous structural change, in response to technological, trade, social, regulatory, economic and other forces. Perhaps it is not surprising, given such sweeping changes, that the customary livelihoods of many in agriculture and forestry are disrupted and threatened. It is also true, however, that periods of upheaval in an industry often have produced great innovations and creative leaps forward. We see particular potential in the movements toward building local businesses that add value to agricultural and forestry resources; improving land and resource management; and stimulating community-based local economic development. These innovations can help create profitable opportunities for entrepreneurs and operators of all scales in agriculture and forestry.

What are Value-Added Strategies and Why Pursue Them?

Communities that specialize in the simple extraction of local bio-based inputs sometimes seek to gain and retain greater value from those natural resources. They may pursue a variety of "value-added" approaches, such as processing, packaging, marketing, and distributing products derived from local natural resources.

Since earnings in simple extractive industries (agricultural production and timber harvesting in particular) are generally low and highly volatile, the addition of these downstream activities can improve a community's economic and environmental sustainability. Value-added enterprises represent excellent business development opportunities for farming, forest-based and other rural communities because a community located near raw inputs can capitalize on those materials and build on local job skills. With declining employment in farming and forestry, the skills of workers leaving these industries are more likely to be transferable to value-added enterprises than to non-farm manufacturing and service industries. Creating value-added jobs can improve the diversity of the local economy, increase local incomes, capture higher profits locally and use the local natural resource base more efficiently and sustainably.

The guide is organized with a logic that may be helpful for people seeking resources to support value-added enterprises. The guide's first four sections follow the progressive stages of developing a new enterprise: resources; then financial, business management, and marketing assistance.

What Motivates Sustainable Land Management Practices?

Increasing numbers of farmers, foresters, and other landowners are seeking to manage their lands using practices that are both environmentally and economically sound. Many farmers, for example, want to reduce their use of pesticides, protect their soil, or improve habitat for wildlife, while maintaining or increasing the profitability of their land. Other landowners, not necessarily farmers, simply aim to protect their land from development pressures. For some, interest in these practices grows from an increasingly regulatory environment. (For example, the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 will remove several commonly used pesticides starting at the turn of the century, encouraging alternative forms of pest management.) Still other landowners are inspired to seek new practices because of their concern about environmental degradation from agriculture or the hope of market opportunities from agricultural commodities produced in environmentally sustainable systems.

This guide offers landowners help in pursuing a wide variety of strategies in land management that combine environmental and economic concerns. These include the following: intensive rotational grazing of livestock; erecting soil conserving structures; establishing an organic or biodynamic farming system; implementing Integrated Pest Management (IPM); diversifying crops and otherwise strengthening crop rotations; restoring wetlands, native prairie or other habitat; and many other strategies.

What Does Community Development Entail?

Both rural and urban communities suffer from the drain of physical and economic resources away from their communities. Many are concerned about job creation, increasing social stability and raising the standard of living of their citizens. For all communities, these needs translate into a broad array of initiatives, from incubators and others means of spawning new businesses, to training programs, job creation, market development, and road-building or other infrastructural improvements. In this process, localities often seek the types of federal economic and technical assistance described in this guide.

Strategies for Using Federal Programs

What Makes a Well-Conceived Proposal for Federal Funding?

A successful federally funded project, whether a research proposal, conservation plan, marketing or other proposal, is no different from any other good project. It has tightly defined purposes, a clear strategy to accomplish them on a realistic timeline, the necessary people, money, and other resources, a basis for evaluating the process when done, and an effective means of communicating results. Many projects are improved by a thoughtful effort to build supporting coalitions. In fact, a funder will often look favorably on, and often require, local matches of funding; and keep in mind that matches usually can also come in the form of existing staff salaries and other "in-kind" contributions, as well as actual dollars.

In designing a good project, be sure that you have included the right people in the planning process itself.

Some starting questions to consider in developing your proposal include the following:

- What's the problem you seek to address?
- What is your principal strategy to resolve that problem?
- Why is this strategy better than other approaches you might consider?
- Have other people, locally or otherwise, addressed this problem? If so, what have you learned from their work, and how does your effort relate to theirs?
- Who else might be concerned about your issues? Should they be involved in your project?
- What's a realistic timeline for action?
- What resources do you need to implement your project? What resources can you use for a non-federal match?
- Would others profit from knowing about your initiative? If so, how do you plan to get the word out?
- How will you measure and evaluate your project's outcomes?

Identifying and Meeting Federal Programs Halfway

Once you've got a good idea of what your project should look like and what resources it requires, it's time to explore federal programs and figure out what programs, if any, can help you achieve your goals. This guide is designed for just that activity. In doing this, it's useful to recognize that few programs were designed for needs precisely like yours. This doesn't necessarily mean that your project goals are inappropriate to a program; but you don't want to waste your time chasing programs that have incompatible goals. Instead of wondering, you will be rewarded for methodical research about how well your project fits within various programs.

First, identify programs in this guide and from other sources whose purposes and available resources seem most suitable to your purposes. It's wise to think creatively about your project's needs. The problems for which you seek help from federal resources are likely complex, and often more than one program may contribute to their solution. For example, you may think your problem can best be solved by applying to one of the grants or loan programs described in this guide. But don't forget that technical assistance, information, conservation cost-share and other resources may strengthen your project as well. So be sure to consider your needs broadly.

Besides this guide, there are many ways to locate resources that may be useful to you. The reference section of larger public libraries, most universities' main libraries, and the development office of any large university often have copies of many useful directories, some dealing with private sources and others with federal ones. Just a few include *The Foundation Directory*, the *National Directory of Corporate Giving*, *Complete Grants Sourcebook for Higher Education*; *Directory of Research Grants*; *Funding Sources for Community and Economic Development*; *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance*; *The Federal Register*; *Federal Support for Nonprofits*; *Government Assistance Almanac*; *Government Giveaways for Entrepreneurs*; *Guide to Federal Funding for Governments and Nonprofits*; and the *Guide to Federal Funding for Education*. Many of these resources are available on the Internet. A few Internet addresses are noted here. The *Catalog of Federal Assistance* is at <http://www.gsa.gov/fdac/> The Community of Science lists both science and non-science programs under its "Funding Opportunities Database" heading at <http://medoc.gdb.org/> And FEDIX offers information and access to free federal grant searches for education and research by agency, subject, and specific interest groups at <http://www.fie.com/>

Further, many other private and public resources exist at the state and local levels, but are not covered here. Contact your State Department of Agriculture, State Forester, local Extension Office and local Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) coordinator to explore those possibilities. Also, asking yourself who might have a stake in the outcomes of your work can sometimes lead to additional potential funding sources.

Once you've identified potential federal programs, figure out where their defined purposes and your needs overlap. Get as much information as you can about projects these programs have funded or collaborated with in the past, to gauge how good the fit is likely to be. You may want to talk with program staff, as well as people or organizations that have worked with a program, to understand better whether there is a fit and if so, how to argue for it.

Try to figure out clearly what factors, in addition to a thoughtfully assembled project proposal, determine funding or a successful collaboration. Examples might include relevance of your topic to a program's current "hot topics," geographical location, extent of non-federal funding match, support from state or federal agencies or political representatives, and so forth. There will be factors you can't control, so be sure to excel in the ones you can.

Hints for Submitting Federal Applications

Once you've designed a good project, prepare it for submission to any program to which you're applying so that it stands the greatest chance of being approved. Make sure it's written according to any format requirements. Identify your central points to make, including how your proposal addresses a program's key goals. Be precise and accurate; don't be tempted to exaggerate the need or over-promise results. Use clear, concise language to make your application or proposal readable. It's smart to have it reviewed by someone whose editing skills you trust. Is it clear? Readable? Grammatical? Pay close attention to formatting, deadline, non-federal monetary match and other stated requirements. And, of course, don't be daunted by having to readjust your proposal's format for each program to which you submit it.

Make sure you understand the review process. Is it based on only a few people, or is it comprehensive? If the contact person makes funding decisions, get to know their preferences. Also find out if there are other people involved in evaluating your proposal and decide if it's appropriate to discuss your project with them. Pursue this thoughtfully, since sometimes it helps to establish a personal contact, but some staff and reviewers are not permitted to discuss individual proposals, and some are annoyed by unsolicited contacts. Under any circumstances, be pleasant and non-combative in discussing your project.

Finally, but very important—don't be discouraged! Many successfully funded grants and applications for federal resources are the result of earlier failed attempts. Be sure to understand why your earlier efforts were rejected, and it is likely to help in future ones.

Getting a Copy of the Guide

To obtain a free copy of this guide, please contact the Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA) program at P.O. Box 3657, Fayetteville, AR 72702, 1-800-346-9140, fax (501) 442-9842, email: askattra@ncatark.uark.edu. Also, look for the entire guide on ATTRA's website at www.attra.org by the fall of 1998. Others distributing this guide, also free of charge, include the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, at W2493 Cty Road ES, East Troy, WI 53120-9271 (414) 642-3303, fax (414) 642-4028; and the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program, 2121 Ag/Life Sciences Surge Building, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742-3358 (301) 405-3186, fax (301) 314-7373. Please be sure to give your complete name and address.

Workshops on Using the Guide

No ongoing direct staff assistance has been designated for users of this guide. However, the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute is conducting a related series of training workshops nationwide through 1998. These workshops aim to help groups and individuals in the sustainable agriculture community maximize their use of the federal program resources identified in this guide. Workshops include reviewing how to conceptualize projects, how to identify programs offering resources that can be helpful to projects and, in the case of grant proposals, how to maximize the chances of getting proposals funded by federal agencies.

For information on these workshops, contact Margaret Krome, Agricultural Policy Coordinator for the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, 2524 Chamberlain Ave., Madison, WI 53705 608-238-1440; 608-238-1569 (fax), e-mail: mkrome@inxpress.net.

I. Research, Information and New Technologies

Also see:

Alternative Agriculture Research and Commercialization Corporation

Cooperative Services

Economic Recovery

The Forest Service's Rural Development Program

Urban and Community Forestry

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)

Free Technical Information Provided to Producers on a Wide Variety of Alternative Crops and Sustainable Farming Topics

ATTRA is the national sustainable farming information center located in the Ozark Mountains at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. ATTRA provides information free-of-charge through telephone requests to those engaged in or serving commercial agriculture, such as farmers, Extension agents, university researchers, farm organizations, and agribusinesses. ATTRA can provide a wide variety of information on sustainable or alternative agriculture: from horticultural and agronomic crops to livestock and farming systems. ATTRA's goal is to help U.S. farmers boost profits and provide healthier food for consumers, while becoming better stewards of the precious natural resources and environment of America's farmlands. Since its inception in 1987, ATTRA's staff of friendly, resourceful specialists has prepared more than 100,000 reports for callers on how to:

- Improve farm income with a diversity of crops/livestock
 - Reduce dependence on costly off-farm inputs
 - Assess new direct marketing methods
 - Produce alternative crops and livestock
 - Institute organic farming practices
 - Incorporate value-added and farm-processed products
 - Improve soil fertility and water quality
 - Rejuvenate rural America through agricultural enterprises
-

Information Available

ATTRA specializes in responding to questions on specific sustainable enterprises or practices. Staff will research the question, summarize findings in writing, and compile supporting literature as appropriate to accompany the report which a caller receives by mail. In addition to providing customized research, ATTRA offers three types of standard materials which are often updated: Information Packages, Current Topics in Sustainable Agriculture, and Resource Lists.

An Information Package contains a 5-20 page topic review written by ATTRA specialists and may also include enclosures, bibliographies, and supply sources. A Current Topic is shorter than an Information Package and usually focuses more on a particular topic of interest rather than providing an overview, and contains few, if any, enclosures for further reading.

A Resource List is designed to make networking easier for organizations, individuals, and companies interested in sustainable agriculture.

Legislative Authority

The Food Security Act of 1985

Financial Information

Funding for fiscal year 1997 was \$1.3 million through USDA's Rural Business-Cooperative Service to support the informational and educational work of ATTRA's 25-member staff. The program is operated by the nonprofit National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT).

Eligibility

ATTRA provides information to farmers, extension agents, university researchers, farm organizers, and agribusinesses as well as other information providers.

ATTRA cannot handle requests for conventional agricultural information or requests by home gardeners and other people not actually involved in or serving commercial agriculture.

Uses and Restrictions

ATTRA provides information packages on sustainable and alternative agriculture. For other information, please contact local services, such as the county Extension office.

Contact

ATTRA prefers requests by telephone. Contact the national program office for assistance and to request information.

National Program Office

P.O. Box 3657
Fayetteville, AR 72702
800-346-9140
501-442-9824; 501-442-9842 (fax)
Email: askattra@ncatark.uark.edu

Internet

www.attra.org

Cooperative Extension Service (CES)

A Partnership Effort in Information Delivery and Educational Support Programs

The partnership occurs among federal, state, and county governments who all provide funding support and management direction to the nation's cooperative extension system.

The CES network links the research and education programs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture to the land-grant universities in each state and to county-level government. The structure and services provided by extension are largely determined at the state and county levels, and vary accordingly. USDA, which has its link to extension through the Cooperative Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) agency, provides only general guidelines and coordination of the extension system, as well as partial funding.

A user can contact CES either at the state or county level, or both. State extension specialists, who are also university faculty, provide in-depth information on a variety of technical subjects, including many agriculture, natural resource, and household/family topics. More than 9,600 local extension agents work in 3,150 U.S. counties. In addition to paid extension staff, trained volunteers work with a number of programs, such as the youth-oriented 4-H programs.

The type of information available through extension offices and programs is very comprehensive, and usually tailored in part to local information needs. In general, information and some technical assistance are available on agriculture, forestry, gardening, household, family, and youth topics. Extension does not normally provide financial assistance, but instead focuses on information delivery through printed publications and newsletters, broadcast media, staff presentations at public meetings, and one-on-one assistance in person or by phone with information seekers. In some locations, diagnostic services are available for soil testing and garden or farm pests. Most extension publications and programs are available for free or at nominal cost through county or university extension offices.

Project Examples

The CES has responded over the years to hundreds of thousands of questions and inquiries on literally thousands of topics, as well as proactively delivering educational programs. There are no national level extension initiatives at this time on value-added agriculture or diversification. However, printed literature and some staff expertise relevant to these topics is available in most states. Many states have extension publications on alternative agricultural crops, sometimes emphasizing horticultural alternatives, sometimes alternative field crops, and sometimes alternative enterprises such as Christmas tree or mushroom production. Usually information is available in each state on developing a farm enterprise budget and/or beginning a small business. Information not available in printed form may be obtained by talking to one or more extension staff at the county or state level and asking for a resource person familiar with these topics.

Legislative Authority

The First Morrill Act, passed in 1862, established a

network of public institutions known as the "land-grant colleges and universities." The Smith-Lever Act in 1914 created the Cooperative Agricultural Extension Service (a partnership among Federal, state, and county governments), which now functions as the Cooperative Extension System. The Second Morrill Act provided additional appropriations for the original 1862 land-grant institutions as well as stimulating establishment of the 1890 land-grant institutions. The Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 designated certain tribal colleges as land grant institutions ("1994 Institutions").

Application and Financial Information

There is generally no financial assistance available through extension and thus no application forms. There are a variety of methods to obtain extension publications. Most county extension offices have available for free or at low cost copies of the extension publications available in the state, and call-in or

walk-in assistance can be provided. Typically, a state-level extension publications office has a list of all currently available extension publications in that state, plus some that are regional extension publications, and will take publications orders by phone or mail. Contacting an extension technical staff person can lead to that person providing publications by mail. Many publications are available at state or county fairs, or other public extension events. Also, a neighboring state often will have extension publications covering different topics which are available to anyone, sometimes for a slightly higher fee to non-residents (get the number of other state extension publication offices from the one in your state). Finally, over the phone or walk-in technical assistance and other value-added topics is available from extension offices.

Eligibility

CSREES programs are open to all citizens without regard to race, gender, disability, religion, age or national origin. Specific eligibility requirements can vary by program.

Contact

Contact your local county extension office (see your local government in the telephone directory), a land-grant university (call the university's main information number and ask for the extension administration office, extension publications office, or the agriculture extension office) or the national agency office listed here.

National Program Office

Dr. B. H. Robinson, Administrator
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
305A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20250-0900
202-720-4423

Internet

State Partners [http://www.reeusda.gov/
statepartners/usa.htm](http://www.reeusda.gov/statepartners/usa.htm)

National Office <http://www.reeusda.gov>

You may also access one of the following via the Internet:

Almanac: almanac@reeusda.gov

Gopher: [gopher.reeusda.gov \(port 70\)](gopher://gopher.reeusda.gov)

Forest Products Conservation and Recycling (FPC&R)

Technology Transfer and Technical and Marketing Assistance to Improve Harvesting and Processing of Forest Products and Utilization of Wood Wastes and Residues

The Forest Service's Forest Products Conservation and Recycling (FPC&R) program supports technical specialists in the Forest Service Regional Offices and the FPC&R Technology Marketing Unit at the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, WI. These specialists assist State Foresters, communities, and businesses in activities that encourage and facilitate the wise, efficient use of forest resources to enhance economic development and stimulate better stewardship of the forest resource. Technology transfer plus technical and marketing assistance are provided to increase economic opportunities through market and community development; reduced environmental impact of harvesting and processing forest products; improved utilization of wood wastes and residues; extended useful life of forest products; and improved understanding of forest resource values. Financial assistance is not provided by FPC&R, however, FPC&R activities are often associated with state- or community-based projects funded by the Forest Service's Economic Recovery or Rural Development programs. These activities generally fall into three categories:

- Recycling activities target wood and wood fiber wastes and residues currently being land-filled or underutilized. They support efforts to find ways to use this material for value-added products, bio-energy, or chemicals and market new or adapt existing products. Mill residue reduction through increased efficiency and opportunities for re-use of wood fiber based products are also key focus areas.
- Value-Added and Alternative Products activities encourage and facilitate increased economic returns from forest assets by providing technical and marketing assistance to communities and businesses. The principal aim is to increase value-added forest product processing which create long term, sustainable jobs. Activities include: drying or finishing wood products; adding new product lines; improving product quality or productivity; and creating new business ventures to expand and serve markets for the many hundreds of non-traditional (special) forest products ranging from pine straw, pine boughs, bear grass, honey, and mushrooms.
- Conservation activities encourage stewardship through conservation--the wise care for and use of forest products to protect a sustainable, diverse forest resource. Wise use strengthens markets, which increases values and creates incentives for proper forest management to improve the quality of the resource. Technical assistance and technology transfer efforts are targeted toward increasing the understanding of forest resource values; implementing technologies which improve environmental sensitivity of harvesting and processing forest products; and increasing the useful life of forest products.

The FPC&R Technology Marketing Unit (TMU) focuses on disseminating and marketing the forest products technology and research capabilities of the Forest Service. The TMU uses an interactive technology transfer model called "INFORM" for working in collaboration with researchers and local governments, private land-owners, and forest industries to uncover problems and needs facing these user groups and provide a technological solution. It supports the unique national and international research mission of the Forest Service in forest products utilization and structural and chemical engineering research by ensuring ready adoption of wood-based material technologies developed at the Forest Products Laboratory and other Forest Service research installations. TMU's mission includes harvesting, manufacturing, marketing, conserving, and recycling of forest-based products. Its objectives and activities include:

- Extending the wood resource through implementation of new technologies for efficient use of wood and fiber-based materials.
- Forming partnerships and coordinate technology transfer programs to pilot forest products technology adoption.
- Providing consultative support for licensing and commercialization of Forest Service inventions with

significant resource implications.

- Communicating needs for new technology by private industry, landowners, and other governmental units to research units for their use in establishing research directions.
 - Maintaining a network of private and governmental forest products technology utilization specialists as a vehicle for disseminating research information, to obtain input on resource utilization needs, and to promote dialogue between user and researcher.
 - Developing and applying new systems to increase productivity and efficiency in dissemination of technical information to industry, environmental, governmental, and consumer groups, educators, and individuals.
-

Project Examples

In addition to assisting individual projects, FPC&R has conducted a number of workshops on the financing, marketing and feasibility of engineered wood products and special forest products; improved solid wood utilization; waste wood and paper recycling; lumber manufacturing quality improvement, and short log/short lumber, among others.

Information Available

The *FPC&R Review* is a distillation of new forest products technology, upcoming meetings and workshops, and emerging issues. This is distributed electronically and mailed (hard copy) through the FPC&R network to Forest Service personnel, USDA Extension System, State Utilization and Marketing specialists, RC&D Councils, and other affiliated programs interested in developing markets for forest products.

Historic Forest Service research and information can be provided to support technology development (for example, in the areas of primary processing; energy from wood; veneer and plywood processing, and wood packaging).

Legislative Authority

Section 3 of the Cooperative Forestry Act of 1978, as amended.

Application and Financial Information

No direct financial assistance is provided under this program; see entries for the Forest Service's Rural Development and Economic Recovery programs.

Eligibility

Any individual, business or public entity is eligible to receive technical assistance within the scope of the program.

Uses and Restrictions

This program provides technical information, advice, and related assistance to private forest landowners and managers, vendors, forest resource operators, forest resource professionals, public agencies and individuals to enable such persons to carry out the management of resources of forest lands, including harvesting, processing and marketing of timber and other forest resources and the marketing and utilization of wood and wood products; and the conversion of wood to energy for domestic, industrial, municipal, and other uses.

Contact

For more information, contact the regional office of the Forest Service near you (see the contact list in the entry for Wood in Transportation) or contact the Forest Products Laboratory:

Forest Products Laboratory
Madison, Wisconsin
608-231-9200; 608-231-9592 (fax)
Email: tllaufen@facstaff.wisc.edu

National Program Office
Cooperative Forestry
USDA Forest Service
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090
202-205-1383; 202-205-0975 (fax)

Internet

www.fpl.fs.fed.us/rwus/fpcr.htm

Forest Products Laboratory (FPL)

Information on Commercial Technological Opportunities, Research and Development Partnerships, and Wood Products

The Forest Service's Forest Products Laboratory (FPL), established in 1910 in Madison, Wis., serves as a centralized wood research laboratory. Its role is to improve the use of wood through science and technology, thereby contributing to the conservation, management, conversion and use of the forest resource. FPL's research programs are accomplished through coordinated partnerships involving industry, university, and government. When beneficial to public interests, innovations developed at the Forest Products Laboratory are patented and licensed for use in private companies for commercial application. The Forest Service Patent Program coordinates its services with the USDA Office of Technology Transfer.

The Forest Products Conservation & Recycling Technology Marketing Unit helps bring its research to potential users by matching customer needs with existing research or guiding new research. Development of cooperative projects provides enhanced benefits to private sector participants through leveraging of R&D funds and bring greater efficiency to public dollars expended for new research.

Current research and technology transfer are conducted in the following areas:

- Processing of Wood Products
- Pulp, Paper, and Packaging
- Fiber and Particle Products
- Engineering Properties and Design Criteria
- Timber Demand and Technology Assessment
- Tropical Wood Utilization
- Wood bonding systems
- Anatomy and Identification
- Biodegradation and Protection
- Fire Safety
- Microbial and Biochemical Technology
- Mycology

Project Examples

Project examples that relate to value-added wood products and commercial applications of FPL technologies include:

- Gridcore Systems International, in California, commercialized patented processes developed by FPL to make semi-structural panels from recycled wastepaper to replace luan plywood, a rain forest material. The company makes lightweight furniture, office dividers, and stage sets from the Gridcore product. This company also obtained grants from the Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR) and venture capital financing from USDA's Alternative Agriculture Research and Commercialization (AARC) Corporation.
- Northwood Plastics Inc., a Wisconsin start-up company, is using technology for mixing recovered wood fiber with recycled plastics to yield a woodfiber/plastic (WFP) combination for injec-

tion-molders and extruders. When compared to polymers without wood fillers, the WFP improves critical thermal and strength properties. Additional benefits include reduced energy costs, lower weight, and faster processing. Cooperative research and development projects with the FPL provided necessary industrial scale-up data for justifying this technology's commercialization.

- Working with grading agencies, FPL developed guidelines for using standard domestic wood's grading procedures for setting strength values for foreign species. Imported structural timber from developing markets in Russia helps to preserve jobs and maintain wood product markets in the U.S. Pacific Northwest. Since the guidelines were established in 1995, three foreign species have been approved for import to U.S.-graded lumber markets and several others are pending approval.

- Recycling waste preservative-treated wood into high-value composite products has traditionally been limited by technical barriers. Much preservative-treated wood contains chromium-based preservatives, such as chromated copper arsenate (CCA) that interfere with the adhesives used in composite manufacturing. FPL researchers created a patented coupling agent that overcomes this interference and can be used to manufacture flakeboards from CCA-treated wood. CCA-treated flakeboards would be well suited for use in high-decay risk applications, and represent a more efficient and environmentally sensitive use of wood resources than landfilling.

Information Available

FPL publishes research findings useful to the general public, industry, regulatory agencies, state and private foresters, educators, and other government agencies and organizations. It has published thousands of technical reports and several major USDA handbooks. More than 100 scholarly journals publish its research results. A list of these publications is available on the FPL website (<http://www.fpl.fs.fed.us/>) or through a fax-back service (1-800-554-9775, Access Code 1) which enables you to obtain lists and short summary publications from FPL.

Legislative Authority

The Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. S 1641-1647), as amended. Agreements are authorized by many different statutes.

Application and Financial Information

Potential users should call, write, fax or e-mail for assistance in locating technical resources. FPL staff will provide information upon request, help develop the information required, or help identify alternative sources of information or expertise.

Eligibility

Information on commercial opportunities and technology transfer programs can be provided upon request.

Uses and Restrictions

FPL does not provide financial assistance to the private sector in the development of cooperative agreements. FPL can assist private sector partners in locat-

ing appropriate sources of capital either through other USDA agencies or participating state government incentive programs.

Contact

For more information about resources and opportunities, contact:

National Program Office
USDA, Forest Service FPL
Technology Marketing Unit
One Gifford Pinchot Drive
Madison, WI 53705-2398
608-231-9200; 608-231-9592 (fax)

Internet

www.fpl.fs.fed.us/welcome.htm

Fund for Rural America (FRA)

Competitive Grants for Agricultural Research and Rural Development, Including Value-Added, New Uses and New Crops

The Fund for Rural America (FRA) was created by the 1996 Farm Bill to assist in the economic development of rural areas by providing funds for rural development programs and a competitive grant program for research, education, and extension activities. Not less than one-third of the funds will be available for research, education, and extension activities; one-third will be available for rural development programs, and one-third will be allocated between rural development and research activities according to the Secretary of Agriculture's discretion. Grants are to be awarded on the basis of merit, quality, and relevance to advancing the purposes of federally supported agricultural research, extension, and education provided in Section 1402 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended. Section 1402 identifies the following purposes:

(1) enhance the competitiveness of the U.S. agriculture and food industry in an increasingly competitive world environment; (2) increase the long-term productivity of the U.S. agriculture and food industry while maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base on which rural America and the U.S. agricultural economy depend; (3) develop new uses and new products for agricultural commodities, such as alternative fuels, and develop new crops; (4) support agricultural research and extension to promote economic opportunity in rural communities and to meet the increasing demand for information and technology transfer throughout the U.S. agriculture industry; (5) improve risk management in the U.S. agriculture industry; (6) improve the safe production and processing of, and adding of value to, U.S. food and fiber resources using methods that maintain the balance between yield and environmental soundness; (7) support higher education in agriculture to give the next generation of Americans the knowledge, technology, and applications necessary to enhance the competitiveness of U.S. agriculture; and (8) maintain an adequate, nutritious, and safe supply of food to meet human nutritional needs and requirements.

Project Examples

The funds allotted to the Under Secretary for Rural Development finance backlogged applications for existing rural development programs. The one-third of funds allocated to research activities support a competitive research grant program. As this new program was just established under the 1996 Farm Bill, no project examples are available at this time for the competitive research grant program.

Legislative Authority

Section 793 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (FAIR Act) (7 U.S.C. 2204(f)).

Application and Financial Information

Regulations and application materials for the competitive research grant program are published in the Federal Register, and are available from the world wide web address below. Inquiries may also be directed to the national program office.

FRA is established as an account in the U.S. Treas-

sury. The Fund will provide \$100 million in each of three years: 1997, 1998, and 1999.

Eligibility

Eligible recipients for this competitive grants program will be public bodies, nonprofit corporations, Indian tribes, and cooperatives with the capacity to conduct and apply scientific research toward the objectives of the FRA. Proposals may be submitted by Federal research agencies, national laboratories, colleges or universities or research foundations maintained by a college or university, or private research organizations. National laboratories include Federal laboratories that are government-owned, contractor-operated, or government-owned, government-operated. If the applicant is a private organization, documentation must be submitted establishing that the private organization has an established and demonstrated capacity to perform research or technology transfer. A decision on the eligibility status of the private organization will be made based on the information submitted.

Uses and Restrictions

Competitive grants may be awarded for periods not to exceed five years, for the support of research, education, and extension projects to further the programs of the USDA. Funds for the competitive grants program are available to USDA for award during a two-year period.

Not more than one percent of total available FRA funds will be used to support Planning Grants for FRA Centers. Proposals may be submitted for Center Planning Grants up to \$25,000 per proposed FRA Center for a maximum project period of six months. Standard Project Grants can be funded up to \$600,000 per project for a maximum project period of four years. CSREES will solicit Center grant applications only from those applicants who are successful in receiving a Center Planning Grant. Applicants intending to submit a Center proposal should register that intention by submitting a Center Planning Grant application.

Not less than 15 percent of the funds awarded under this program for research, education, and extension activities under the Core Initiative and the Secretary's Initiative will be used for grants to colleges, universities, or research foundations maintained by a college or university that rank in the lowest one-third of such entities based on federal research funds received (excepting monies received under the Fund).

Funds awarded under this RFP may not be used for the construction of a new building or the acquisition, expansion, remodeling, or alteration of an existing building.

Contact

National Program Office

Patrick O'Brien, Deputy Administrator
Office of Special Programs
USDA/CSREES, Aerospace Center
901 D Street, SW, Stop 2240
202-401-6251
Email: pobrien@reeusda.gov

Internet

www.reeusda.gov/fra

National Agroforestry Center (NAC)

Develops and Disseminates Agroforestry Technologies and Information

The National Agroforestry Center (NAC), representing a partnership of the USDA Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service, was authorized by Congress in the 1990 Farm Bill to accelerate the development and application of agroforestry technologies to attain more economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable land-use systems. The Center acts as a catalyst organization to involve cooperators and stakeholders in all aspects of agroforestry technology development through cooperative research and development, technology transfer and applications, and international exchange.

Agroforestry is defined as the intentional growing of trees and shrubs in combination with crops or forage. It also includes tree and shrub plantings on farms and ranches that improve habitat value for humans and wildlife, or that provide woody plant products in addition to agricultural crops or forage. Agroforestry is distinguished from traditional forestry by having the additional aspect of a closely associated agricultural or forage crop. Agroforestry provides both income for the landowner and conservation/environmental enhancement benefits for the land. A key concept in agroforestry is "Working Trees"—trees planted in a specific place for a specific purpose. Agroforestry practices include riparian buffer strips, streambank bioengineering, alley cropping, windbreaks, tree/pasture systems, tree/specialty crop systems, living snowfences, forest farming, waste disposal systems, and wildlife habitat plantings.

NAC is currently emphasizing the development of new options to generate sustainable enterprises based on agroforestry. These include conventional forest products and specialty products such as ginseng, herbs, mushrooms, and floral greens.

Project Examples

- NAC is working with the University of Minnesota Center for Integrated Natural Resources and Agricultural Management to perform a national assessment of the opportunities that incorporate short-rotation woody crops into agricultural production systems as plantings that provide both income and conservation/environmental benefits. A national conference, "Enterprise Development through Agroforestry" is planned for 1998.
- NAC and Cornell University's Department of Natural Resources are cooperating to perform a national assessment of the opportunities to grow high-value specialty crops in agroforestry-based systems. This assessment will explore the economic, environmental, and social aspects of growing specialty crops (i.e. ginseng, herbs, mushrooms, floral greens) in managed systems.

members on specific applications of agroforestry technologies.

- *Agroforestry for Farms and Ranches: An Introduction to Using Tree and Shrub Practices in Sustainable Agricultural Systems* is available on the NRCS Internet site (www.nhq.ncrs.usda.gov/BCS/forest/tnote1.html) or through the national program office.
- A variety of brochures on trees, agroforestry and windbreaks.
- Working tree displays.
- Videos such as *Green Side Up*, a three-module tree planting training video, and *Agroforestry: Agriculture & Forestry Working Together*

Information Available

Publications include:

- *Inside Agroforestry*, a quarterly newsletter.
- *Agroforestry Notes*, a technical notes series for

Legislative Authority

Section 1243 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (1990 Farm Bill).

Application and Financial Information

Limited funding for cooperative agreements is targeted to the highest priority needs.

Eligibility

NAC's target audience is technical assistance providers. Any practitioner may seek technical information, educational materials, and training in agroforestry opportunities through NAC. These services are provided free of charge.

Contact

For more information and assistance, you may contact the national program manager in Lincoln, Neb., or any of the following agroforesters:

Central and Northern Great Plains

Jerry Bratton, 402-437-5178 ext. 24

Northeast and Midwest

Bruce Wight, 402-437-5178 ext. 36

South

Jim Robinson, 817-334-5232 ext. 3624

West

Gary Kuhn, 206-616-7166

National Program Office

Michele Schoeneberger and Jerry Bratton
Acting Program Managers
National Agroforestry Center
East Campus--UNL
Lincoln, NE 68583-0822
402-437-5178 ext. 27; 402-437-5712 (fax)

National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program (NRICGP)

Grants for Research and Development for Sustainable Production Systems, New Uses and Added Value for Agricultural Products, and Revitalized Rural Economies

The National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program (NRICGP) provides grants for research that will provide new knowledge for improved national agricultural competitiveness, sustainability, and economic performance; for credible environmental stewardship; for improved human health; and for the revitalization of rural communities. More specifically, research funded by proposals will form a broad base of knowledge for acceptable cost-effective improvements in agricultural products, processes, and practices, particularly for developing production systems that are sustainable both environmentally and economically; for finding new uses of agricultural products; for adding value to all stages of agricultural products; for enhancing competitiveness of agricultural products; for developing means to protect natural resources and wildlife; for optimizing livestock and crop health, quality, and productivity; for protecting human health and improving food safety.

There are nine program research divisions areas under the NRICGP. The research division areas that relate directly to sustainable value-added systems and diversification in agriculture and forest products are:

- Markets, Trade and Rural Development
- Enhancing Value and Use of Agricultural and Forest Products
- Agricultural Systems Research

Markets, Trade and Rural Development

The purpose of this Division is twofold. One is to support research to enhance the global marketability and competitiveness of U.S. agricultural, forest, and fish products. The second purpose of the Division is to develop and/or apply research methodologies to problems affecting economic welfare and quality of living of rural communities and people by examining the effects of international, national, and local policies. Research involves comparative analysis of the impacts of policy options and alternatives on natural resource use, population distribution, and the structure of rural society. The goal is to develop new economic development opportunities to sustain rural communities and people in the United States.

Rural areas dependent on agriculture, forestry, and other natural resource based industries have been subjected to various forces that reduce their economic vitality. This program calls for theoretical and empirical research to help understand the ways these forces affect economic vitality and evaluate how well public policies might restore the vitality. Research is supported in three general areas: (1) New theoretical and methodological studies to focus on improving the social and economic well-being of rural families and communities at the national, regional and local levels; (2) Empirical studies to identify the forces that influence population changes, employment, wage levels and other indicators of social and economic viability; and (3) Empirical evaluations of methods and policies to diversify the economics of rural areas, particularly those highly dependent on agriculture, forestry, and other natural resource extractive industries.

Enhancing Value and Use of Agricultural and Forest Products

This division responds to the growing need to enhance the competitive value and quality of U.S. Agricultural and forest products. Research in this area builds the scientific base of knowledge to use agricultural and forest materials more fully and effectively. The Division supports both fundamental and applied research on new and improved processes and on development of new uses for agricultural and forest materials. Program Areas in this Division include: Value-Added Products Research encompassing Food and Non-Food Characterization/Process/Product Research, Biofuels Research, and Improved Utilization of Wood and Wood Fiber.

Agricultural Systems

Although agricultural research has most often focused on individual system elements, the Agricultural Systems program provides opportunities for integration of these elements through a systems research program. The objective is to obtain knowledge that is essential to sustain the viability of agriculture. Such research is needed to address directly interaction among the elements that comprise agricultural systems.

The program supports systems research that has the potential to aid in the development and/or evaluation of national, regional, community, and/or farm level practices and policies that will sustain: a safe and adequate supply of agricultural products and services; environmental quality and the natural resource base, human health, and the economic viability and quality of life of rural communities; and address linkages between urban and rural areas.

Project Examples

Markets, Trade and Rural Development. Situational Segmentation Opportunities for U.S. Fruit Exports to Japan, University of Arizona. This \$103,122 grant was for studying U.S. fruit exports to Japan. Japanese fruit consumption often takes place in the context of snacking and gift giving. This project will assess situational factors that influence the snacking and gift giving distribution systems.

Non-Food Characterization/Process/Product Research. Production of High Value Biodegradable Polymers in Tobacco, Auburn University. Grant of \$120,000. Environmental problems require the development of biodegradable plastics which can be produced from renewable resource without the use of toxic and hazardous chemicals and which will help to solve the increasing global disposal problem. Every year a large surplus of agricultural raw materials are produced in the United States. High value products may be produced and harvested from the leafy biomass without any additional investment. Therefore, this project is designed to reduce reliance on petrochemicals while promoting the use of surplus agro-based raw materials to make environmentally friendly biodegradable plastics in plants. The primary goal of this project is to achieve low-cost production of protein-based polymers in plants.

Research supported by this program must have one or more of the following purposes:

1. Enhance the competitiveness of the United States agriculture and food industry in an increasingly competitive world environment.
2. Increase the long-term productivity of the United States agriculture and food industry while maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base on which rural America and the U.S. agricultural economy depend.
3. Develop new uses and new products for agricultural commodities, such as alternative fuels, and develop new crops.

tural commodities, such as alternative fuels, and develop new crops.

4. Support agricultural research and extension to promote economic opportunity in rural communities and to meet the increasing demand for information and technology transfer throughout the United States agriculture industry.
5. Improve risk management in the United States agriculture industry.
6. Improve the safe production and processing of, and adding of value to, United State food and fiber resources using methods that maintain the balance between yield and environmental soundness.
7. Support higher education in agriculture to give the next generation of Americans the knowledge, technology, and applications necessary to enhance the competitiveness of United States agriculture.
8. Maintain an adequate, nutritious, and safe supply of food to meet human nutritional needs and requirements.

The NRICGP solicits proposals that are single or multi-disciplinary; fundamental or mission-linked. The following definitions apply:

Fundamental Research: Research that tests scientific hypothesis and provides basic knowledge which allows advances in applied research and from which major conceptual breakthroughs are expected to occur.

Mission-Linked Research: Research on specifically identified agricultural problems which, although a continuum of efforts, provides information and technology that may be transferred to users and may relate to a products, practice, or process.

Multidisciplinary Research: Research in which investigators from two or more disciplines are collaborating closely. These collaborations, where appropriate, may integrate the biological, physical, chemical, or social sciences.

Contact

For more information and applications, contact the national program office. Applications and the following materials are available via Internet by sending a message with your name, mailing address (not email address), phone number, and a list of materials that you are requesting to psb@reeusda.gov. These materials will then be mailed to you (not emailed) as quickly as possible.

NRI Program Description, which describes all of the funding programs available through NRICGP.

NRI Application Kit, which is a document that contains guidelines for proposal preparation and the requisite forms.

NRI Abstracts of Funded Research, which is a searchable database of nontechnical abstracts written by the principal investigator or recent research projects.

NRI Annual Report, starting with Fiscal Year 1995, describes the program concept, authorization, policy, inputs to establish research needs, program execution, and outcomes, including relevant statistics.

National Program Office

Mark Bailey

NRICGP

c/o Proposal Services Unit/OEP/CSREES/USDA

Stop 2245

1400 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-2245

202-401-5038

Email: mbailey@reeusda.gov

Internet

www.reeusda.gov/new/nri/nricgp.htm

Pest Management Alternatives Research Program

Competitive Grants Supporting the Development and Implementation of Pest Management Alternatives When Regulatory Action by EPA or Voluntary Cancellation by the Registrant Results in the Unavailability of Certain Agricultural Pesticides or Pesticide Uses

This program addresses anticipated changes in pest management on food and feed crops resulting from pesticide review addressed in the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 (FQPA). The goal of the program is to develop or identify alternatives for critical needs to insure that crop food producers have reliable methods of managing pest problems. Its emphasis is to develop mitigation strategies and/or pest management alternatives based on use and usage data for pesticides that are considered a high priority for tolerance review and reassessment under FQPA.

This program results from an agreement between the USDA and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to cooperate in : 1) Supporting the development and implementation of agricultural pest management approaches that are conducted in the most environmentally-sound manner possible, with sufficient pest management alternatives to reduce risks to human health and the environment, to reduce the incidence of pest resistance to pesticides, and to ensure economical agricultural production; and (2) Establishing a process to conduct the research, technology transfer and registration activities necessary to ensure adequate pest management alternatives are available to meet important agricultural needs for situations in which regulatory action would result in pest management problems.

Additional federal funds are also made available to support IPM extension education efforts by funding IPM staff in all 50 states and six territories of the U.S. These IPM staff are available to the public for consultation and technical assistance on IPM issues. Some states use these funds to support in-state mini-grants programs. Obtain additional information from the IPM Program in your state.

Project Examples

The following projects were funded by this program in 1996:

- Integrated Biointensive Management of Apple Arthropod Pests, \$60,282, two years.
- Management of Nematodes on Carrots by Using a Sudangrass Cover Crop, \$111,994, two years.
- Integration of Alternative Pesticides and Natural Controls for Mushroom Flies, \$117,394, two years.
- Modifying Cultural Practices for Management of Onion Bulb Mites in New York, \$69,996, two years.

Application and Financial Information

To obtain copies of the full solicitation of proposals, the administrative provisions for the program, and the Application Kit (containing required forms,

certifications, and instructions for preparing and submitting applications for funding) contact: Proposal Services Unit, Grants Management Branch; Office of Extramural Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2245; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-2245; Telephone: (202) 401-5048. When contacting the Proposal Services Unit, please indicate that you are requesting forms for the Special Research Grants Program--Pest Management Alternatives Research.

You may also request application materials via Internet by sending a message with your name, mailing address (not e-mail) and telephone number to psb@reeusda.gov that states you wish to receive a copy of the application materials for the FY 1997 Special Research Grants Program, Pest Management Alternatives. The materials will then be mailed to you as quickly as possible.

Grant amounts averaged \$100,000 in 1996 and 1997. About 18-20 grants are awarded annually.

Eligibility

Under this authority, subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary may make grants, for periods not to exceed five years, to state agricultural experiment stations, all colleges and universities, other research institutions and organizations, federal agencies, private organizations or corporations, and individuals.

Proposals from scientists affiliated with foreign organizations are not eligible for funding nor are scientists who are directly or indirectly engaged in the registration of pesticides for profit; however, their collaboration with funded projects is encouraged.

Uses and Restrictions

CSREES seeks proposals that address two categories of activity: (1) The acquisition of use (particular crops and pests for which a pesticide is used) and usage data (application rates, methods, and formulations of a pesticide); and (2) the identification or development of replacement or mitigation technologies. Proposals to conduct one or both of these two categories of activity will be accepted. Specifically, the program seeks proposals that address:

Use and Usage Data Acquisition: The program seeks data generation and analyses establishing the scope of potential alternative pest management needs for a large number of crops, especially minor crops, which currently rely on specific pesticides (identified in the solicitation materials). Data on the actual amount of use and specific use patterns of identified pesticides are desired as are the analyses that will help determine and refine the scope of future research needed to develop mitigation or alternative management strategies. This research should lead to an improved understanding of how identified pesticides are used on various crops, the role of each pesticide and its particular use pattern for pest management, potential alternative management strategies and associated constraints, and options for mitigating dietary risk through altering use patterns while maintaining the benefits of the pesticide. Emphasis should be placed on the ability to capture data needed by decision-makers in a form that facilitates data entry and that allows manipulation for data analysis and report generation. Proposals for an information management system will be considered. Projects under this category

must be completed in one year.

Replacement or Mitigation Technologies: This part of the program funds the identification and demonstration of pest management alternatives or mitigation procedures for one or more pesticides (from a list identified by CSREES). The focus should be on modifying existing approaches or introducing new methods, especially ecologically based methods, that can be rapidly brought to bear on pest management challenges resulting from implementation of FQPA. Durability and practicality of the proposed pest management option(s) or mitigation procedure(s), and compatibility with integrated pest management systems is critical. Both technological and economic feasibility should be considered. Pest management alternatives or risk mitigation options identified should address various EPA risk concerns for pesticides being reviewed under FQPA (e.g., dietary or worker exposure, groundwater or ecological risk). Replacements for methyl bromide are not addressed by this request for proposals.

Proposals must show evidence of significant involvement of producers or other pesticide user groups in project design and implementation, including data acquisition and analysis, and the identification of potential solutions. Public-private partnerships and matching resources from non-federal sources, including producer or commodity groups, are encouraged. Proposals should describe how state and federal registrations of new pest management options will be obtained when they are required prior to use of new methods.

Contact

See "Application and Financial Information" to obtain application materials.

National Program Office

Michael Fitzner
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture; Stop 2220
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-2220
202-401-4939; 202-401-4888 (fax)
Email: mfitzner@reeusda.gov

Internet

<http://www.reeusda.gov/ipm/pmapfund.htm>

Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP)

Grants to be Matched by States for Projects Aimed at Reducing the Risks and Uses of Pesticides in Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Settings

Project Grants for PESP are administered by the National Foundation for IPM Education, using funding from the U.S. EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs. The goal of PESP is to reduce the risks and use of pesticides in agricultural and non-agricultural settings in the U.S. The program's two major goals are: 1) to develop specific use/risk reduction strategies that include reliance on biological pesticides and other approaches to pest control that are thought to be safer than traditional chemical methods; and 2) by the year 2000, to have 75% of U.S. agricultural acreage adopt integrated pest management programs.

Organizations can participate in PESP either as partners or supporters. Partners are organizations that use pesticides or represent pesticide users. Partners agree to develop and implement formal strategies to reduce the use and risk of pesticides. In particular, they agree pesticide use will be tailored to specific sites, crops, and regions of the country. Partners, of which there are about 35 representing at least 45,000 pesticides users, commit themselves to define and implement their strategies in a timely fashion and to report regularly on progress.

Supporters are organizations that do not use pesticides, but do have significant influence over pest management practices. Food processors, for example, may influence the use of pesticides on produce they buy, even though they do not apply pesticides to the produce themselves. Supporters may include public interest groups whose constituencies have a strong interest in pesticide use/risk reduction. Unlike partners, supporters do not need to develop formal pest management strategies. Instead, they agree to promote programs that facilitate environmental stewardship. Participation in PESP offers the following benefits:

- It offers the opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to environmental stewardship, enhance public perception of the organization, constituent support, and employee morale.
- Upon joining, an organization is assigned a liaison who serves as the official contact with EPA. The liaison can help obtain information about the partnership and other EPA programs, policies, and procedures, and represent the organization to the EPA.
- As funds allow, EPA and USDA provide partners with seed money to help support pest management practices that reduce pesticide use and risk.

Project Examples

The following projects were funded in the 1997 competition:

- The University of California's Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems received a \$40,000 grant to establish native, non-crop farmscape vegetation for erosion control and pesticide use reduction in strawberries in California's Monterey Bay Area.
- The Food Alliance and the Washington State Department of Agriculture received a grant for \$40,000 to increase biointensive IPM adoption through the Food Alliance Stewardship Program.
- Rutgers Cooperative Extension in New Jersey

received a grant for \$39,833 to stimulate the adoption and use of integrated pest management (IPM) practices in fruit production through mating disruption.

Non-eligible groups are encouraged to contact their EPA Regional Environmental Stewardship Program Coordinator for assistance in identifying potential project partners.

Uses and Restrictions

Projects must address the risk/use reduction goals of the PESP, pesticide pollution prevention or Integrated Pest Management (IPM). Other projects may be con-

sidered if they complement these goals such as work with nutrient management. The type of projects that will be considered include education, demonstration, outreach and technology transfer. Projects may carry out education, demonstration, outreach, and technology transfer. Construction projects are not permitted under this award.

Application and Financial Information

The federal share of project grants is limited to a range of \$30,000-\$40,000 of allowable project costs. Organizations receiving funds are required to match federal funds by at least 50 percent. For example, a grant request for \$30,000 would support a project of no less than \$60,000, with the state providing the balance. State contributions may come in the form of dollars, in-kind good and services, and/or third party contributions. Project duration should be 18 to 24 months.

The EPA Regional Offices are responsible for all mailings of the Request for Proposals within each region. Proposals should be submitted to regional offices for review and ranking. Proposals that the regions rank highest are evaluated by a panel composed of headquarters and regional representatives. Funding decisions will be made based on the ranking panel's recommendations.

Criteria for evaluation of applications include, but are not limited to: the partner's progress toward developing a stewardship strategy, the technical merits of the project, the need for the project and the potential of the project to contribute to meaningful and measurable pesticide risk and use reduction.

Proposals must be submitted on the format provided by the PESP. The deadline is generally in June. Notification is usually given in less than 30 days.

Eligibility

All organizations with a commitment to pesticide use/risk reduction are eligible to join the PESP, either as partners or as supporters. Eligible applicants include the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, any U.S. territory or possession, any agency or instrumentality of a state, including state universities, and all federally recognized Native American tribes. For convenience, the term "state" in this notice refers to all eligible applicants. Local governments, private universities, private nonprofit

entities, private businesses and individuals are not eligible. The organizations excluded from applying directly are encouraged to work with eligible applicants in developing proposals that include them as participants in the projects. Contact your EPA Regional Environmental Stewardship Program coordinator for assistance in identifying potential project partners. EPA strongly encourages this type of cooperative arrangement.

Contact

Regional Pesticide Environmental Stewardship coordinators:

Robert Koethe, US EPA Region 1 (CPT)
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Roccena Lawatch, US EPA Region 9 (CMD4-3)
(415) 744-1068; Lawatch.Roccena@epamail.epa.gov

Karl Arne, US EPA Region 10 (ECO-084)
(206) 553-2576; Arne.Karl@epamail.epa.gov

Internet

<http://es.inel.gov/partners/pest/pest.html>

Regional Integrated Pest Management Program

Competitive Grants for Research and Extension Activities Related to Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Administered through Regional Networks

A competitive grants program for research and extension activities related to Integrated Pest Management (IPM) administered through four regional networks, the IPM Special Grants research program has been funded at around \$2.7 million annually. The corresponding extension program has been funded at around \$11 million per year, administered through land grants in each of the four regions.

Projects may span the spectrum from development of new IPM tactics, to combined research-extension implementation projects, to extension education and training. Because production systems and specific pest management problems vary significantly across the country, each of the four regions is given maximum flexibility in setting research and education priorities. Each region runs its own competition, establishing regional priorities for funding of projects. Some priorities are crop-specific, while others are based on various approaches to problem-solving through IPM. Historically, the research program has been somewhat more available than the extension program to non-land grant collaborators.

Project Examples

The following projects were funded by regional programs:

- Process to Identify Barriers and Opportunities to Biologically-Based IPM: A large-scale mailed survey of growers was conducted to establish the extent of adoption of various IPM systems, to identify factors which hinder adoption of biologically-based IPM systems, and to prioritize future research, extension and training needs.
- Ecological Pest and Soil Management Systems for Potatoes in Maine: Conventional, reduced chemical, and biological pest management systems for potato cultivation were compared within a 15-acre cropping system study to analyze the management, ecological, and economic implications of these alternative cropping systems.
- Development of Sustainable Urban Agro-Ecosystems and Biocontrol Strategies for Gypsy Moth and Turf Pests: This research, carried out at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center in Maryland, focused on the development of pest management techniques and programs for the gypsy moth in non-forest areas such as homesites, communities, and suburban parks.
- Cover Crops Role in Reduced-Tillage Sustainable Farming: The Agricultural Research Service of the Rodale Institute, in Pennsylvania, received

funds to develop, document, and demonstrate innovative cover crop management systems for profitable no-till production of cotton, sorghum and corn in the southern U.S. by comparing systems which do not increase herbicide applications with predominant conventional practices. Field days and other demonstration activities will convey findings to farmers.

Eligibility

Staff of land grant universities in the U.S. may apply for this competition. Other organizations and individuals may work only as collaborators or as sub-contractors.

Uses and Restrictions

In each of the four regions, research and extension staff appointed by their respective agricultural experiment station and cooperative extension directors work together to develop requests for proposals that ensure that available resources address priority pest management problems in the region.

Application and Financial Information

Requests for Proposals are available through the Internet and by more conventional means in each of the four regions. Your regional contact person (see

"Contact" below) can suggest the best means to obtain information on: funding opportunities, priorities for research and extension projects, and application deadlines.

Proposals are evaluated through a peer review process and ranked according to the goals and objectives of the program, scientific merit and appropriateness of budget. Funding recommendations are then submitted to CSREES by each region's administrative advisers.

Contact

Northeast Region

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Chair, NEREC
IPM Program
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North Central Region

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E-mail: eeo@aes.purdue.edu

Southern Region

Larry Crowder
Oklahoma State University
405-744-5398

Western Region

Gary McIntyre
970-491-1930

National Program Office

Michael Fitzner
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Stop 2220
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-2220
202-401-4939; 202-401-6156 (fax)
e-mail: mfitzner@reeusda.gov

Internet

<http://www.reeusda.gov/ipm/regrants.htm>

Science To Achieve Results (STAR)

Grant Competitions for Research that can Inform EPA Decision-Making

STAR, is a research program within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) focusing on the reduction of uncertainty associated with risk assessment and reduction of risks to human health and ecosystems. The grants are intended to facilitate cooperation between EPA and the scientific community to help forge solutions to environmental problems.

The STAR Program was intended to improve the quality of science used in EPA's decision-making process. STAR is designed to recruit and engage the participation of the nation's best scientists in the implementation of the Office of Research and Development's research program. The STAR Program includes the grant opportunities discussed below and fellowships and research center programs which are not discussed here.

Project Examples

The following are examples of a few of the projects funded by the STAR program in different project categories:

- Endocrine Disrupters: The Michigan PBB Cohort 20 Years Later: Endocrine Disruption? This project examines the cohort of 1900 women and their offspring who were exposed to polybrominated biphenyls (PBB) as a contaminant of cattle feed in 1973. The project will ascertain the cumulative incidence since exposure and will attempt to determine if there is evidence of endocrine disruption associated with PBB exposure. Project Amount: \$360,005 over three years.

- Water and Watersheds: Modeling Effects of Alternative Landscape Design and Management on Water Quality and Biodiversity in Midwest Agricultural Watersheds. The ecological and socioeconomic impacts of human land use and management decisions will be analyzed for six agricultural watersheds in Iowa, comparing the present landscape and three designed alternative visions of these same watersheds 25 years in the future. The project aims to inform land owners and policy-makers (for example, those crafting Farm Bill 2000) of the effects of land-use and management choices on water resources, ecosystem function, and human social systems in the Western Corn Belt Region. Project Amount: \$1,228,521 over three years.

- Exposure of Children to Pesticides: Exposure of Children to Pesticides in Yuma County, Arizona. Yuma County is responsible for growing much of the nation's fresh fruit and vegetable supply during the winter months.

Seasonal and migrant laborers and their families are often exposed to a variety of pesticides. The project will evaluate 300 children recruited from the Valley Health Clinic, a primary care provider that serves primarily low-income Hispanic and Cocopah residents who are at great risk for routine exposure to pyrethroids and cholinesterase inhibitors. Project Amount: \$596,039 over three years.

Application and Financial Information

Grant applications are initially reviewed by EPA to determine their legal and administrative acceptability. Acceptable applications are then reviewed by a technical peer review group. This review is designed to evaluate each proposal according to its scientific merit. Each review group is composed of non-EPA scientists, engineers, social scientists, and/or economists who are experts in their respective disciplines and are proficient in the technical areas they are reviewing. A summary statement of the scientific review by the panel will be provided to each applicant. Funding decisions are the sole responsibility of EPA. Grants are selected on the basis of technical merit, relevancy to the research priorities outlined, program balance, and budget.

Funding levels vary (\$75,000 to \$500,000 per year), depending on the solicitation and research area.

Eligibility

These grants are available to principal investigators in universities and other nonprofit research institutions. Academic and nonprofit institutions located

in the U.S., and state or local governments are eligible under all existing authorizations. Profit-making firms and other federal agencies are not eligible to receive assistance from EPA under this program.

Potential applicants who are uncertain of their eligibility should contact Dr. Robert E. Menzer (see "Contact" below).

Uses and Restrictions

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Research and Development (ORD), entertained proposals for the following areas of special interest in FY 1997: 1) Exploratory Research; 2) Ecosystem Indicators; 3) Issues in Human Health Risk Assessment; 4) Endocrine Disruptors; 5) Ambient Air Quality; 6) Health Effects and Exposures to Particulate Matter and Associated Air Pollutants; 7) Drinking Water; and 8) Contaminated Sediments.

EPA collaborated with other federal agencies in FY 1997 by soliciting grant applications in the following research areas: 1) Water and Watersheds (joint with NSF); 2) Technology for a Sustainable Environment (joint with NSF); 3) Decision-making and Valuation for Environmental Policy (joint with NSF); 4) Harmful Algal Blooms (joint with NOAA, NSF, and ONR); 5) Bioremediation (joint with DOE, NSF, and ONR); 6) Metal Toxicities Associated with Mixtures: Molecular and Cellular Effects Relevant to Carcinogenesis (joint with NCI); 7) Ecosystem Restoration (joint with NASA); and 8) Arsenic (joint with AWWARF and ACWA).

Contact

Additional general information on the grants program, forms used for applications, etc., may be obtained by exploring NCERQA's web page (see below). EPA does not make mass-mailings of Requests for Applications. Information not available on the Internet may be obtained by contacting the national program office.

National Program Office

Dr. Robert Menzer

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

National Center for Environmental Research and
Quality Assurance (8703)

401 M Street, SW

Washington DC 20460

202-564-6849

E-mail: menzer.robert@epamail.epa.gov

Information: 1-800-490-9194

Internet

<http://www.epa.gov/ncerqa>

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program

Grants to Improve the Environmental and Economic Sustainability of Farming and Ranching to Farms, Educational Institutions, Nonprofits and Producers

The Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program provides grants for improving the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of farming and ranching. Grants are made to farms, universities, nonprofit organizations, and research/education institutions or agencies. Educational and extension programs are also part of the SARE program. SARE works to increase knowledge about—and help farmers and ranchers adopt—practices that are economically viable, environmentally sound and socially responsible. To advance such knowledge nationwide, SARE administers a variety of competitive grants programs and manages an information network focusing on sustainable agriculture.

SARE's regional offices administer four grant programs. Two of SARE's grant programs, Producer Grants and Research and Education Grants, may be used for on-farm research to explore diversification and marketing opportunities. SARE Professional Development Grants are used for a variety of professional development activities, ranging from conducting workshops to creating educational videos to hosting on-farm training sessions for extension workers and conservation professionals.

Getting research results and helpful information to farmers in a timely, useful fashion is a high priority of the SARE program. SARE manages the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN), a cooperative effort between land-grant universities, Extension, nonprofits, agribusinesses, farmers and ranchers to promote effective communication about sustainable agriculture through a variety of printed and electronic information tools.

Project Examples

The SARE program has funded hundreds of projects to explore and apply economically profitable, environmentally sound and socially supporting farming systems. The following examples focus on the development of diversification and value-added opportunities, in grants directly to farmers, universities and other organizations:

- *Producing and Processing Sweet Sorghum in the Upper Midwest:* A Wisconsin farmer who raised crops and livestock on 170 acres decided to scale back to grow high-value crops on fewer acres. As part of his new approach, this producer grant recipient learned how to successfully grow sweet sorghum in Wisconsin's short growing season. The producer now sells sorghum syrup, as well as pumpkins, sweet corn, and broom corn for handmade brooms, at local farmers' markets.
- *Investigating the Viability of Growing Herbs as Alternative Crops for Iowa Farmers:* This project examined how herb production practices could fit into current farm operations, determine which herb crops had the highest profit potential, and evaluated various retail and wholesale marketing alternatives. Funding: \$50,260 SARE; \$10,500 Matching

- *Organic Tomato Production and Marketing Manual:* This producer project builds on a previous New Jersey Agriculture Department and NOFA New Jersey initiative that successfully developed uniform packaging systems and established a market for organic tomatoes. Funding: \$4,935
- *New Harvesting and Marketing Methods for Chinese Chestnuts:* This producer grant recipient will experiment with harvesting and marketing methods for Chinese chestnuts. Funding: \$2,400
- *Expanding the Market for Sustainably Produced Beef in Pennsylvania:* This producer grant recipient is expanding direct sales of sustainably produced beef in the Harrisburg area and offering customers the opportunity to visit the farm. Funding: \$1,304

Information Available

SARE, through SAN, publishes handbooks, brochures, and information catalogs. Information about SAN and SARE publications is available through any SARE office or through the Northeast Region's office at the University of Vermont. Call (802) 656-0471. Some of the publications available

include:

- *The Sustainable Agriculture Directory of Expertise.* \$18.95. This "yellow pages" of sustainable agriculture puts you in touch with more than 700 individuals and organizations with expertise in sustainable agriculture. Seven handy indexes help you customize your search. An accompanying 3.5-inch diskette version provides additional listings.
- *Source Book of Sustainable Agriculture.* \$12. More than 500 entries abstracting publications, videos, and other information sources on sustainable farming. Several indexes and simple icons simplify searches. Expanded and updated in 1997, this is an excellent resource for educators, outreach personnel, and producers.
- *Steel in the Field: A farmer's guide to weed management tools.* \$18. This farmer-oriented book speaks to experienced or novice crop producers in any part of the country. More than 45 drawings accent technical descriptions on the role, design and cost of tools. Twenty-one farmers (representing row crop, vegetable and dryland systems) from across the country on large to small farms explain their sustainable, profitable weed management systems integrating cultivation, flaming, crop rotation, careful tillage and soil management with reduced herbicides — or none at all. Includes index; contact list; and a source list for many tools.
- *Managing Cover Crops Profitably, 2nd edition.* \$19. A practical handbook that helps remove the guesswork for farmers considering cover crops. Explores how and why cover crops work and provides all the information needed to build covers into any farming operation.
- *The Real Dirt—Farmers Tell About Organic and Low-Input Practices in the Northeast.* \$13.95. 264 pages of firsthand advice from experienced practitioners on the many biological, cultural, mechanical and chemical options available to organic and low-input farmers.

Legislative Authority

Title 16—Subtitle B—Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education—of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (1990 Farm Bill)

Application and Financial Information

SARE's four regional offices administer three grant

programs: (1) SARE Research and Education grants, (2) SARE Producer Grants, and (3) SARE Professional Development grants. All grant programs have only one application period per year. However, each grant has its own application, deadline, and focus. Each region solicits proposals and awards grants.

- *SARE Research and Education Grants:* Since 1988, competitive grants for sustainable agriculture research and education have been awarded by four regional administrative councils. Generally ranging from \$30,000 to \$200,000, they fund projects that usually involve scientists, producers and others in an interdisciplinary approach. Many funded projects involve on-farm research trials with crops and/or livestock; other projects have studied quality of life, agricultural marketing, integrated farming systems, and soil and water conservation. Successful proposals typically include economic analysis and outreach components. The program also funds education and demonstration projects, including the development of farmer-to-farmer networks. Producers can team up with one or more technical experts (such as a university researcher) to apply for this grant. Typically \$1.2 to \$1.4 million is available for each region.
- *SARE Producer Grants:* Producers wanting to test an idea should consider this grant program for a research or education project. Many producer projects involve on-farm trials with crops or livestock, but some have focused on marketing or educational activities. Producers are expected to partner with an extension professional or other agricultural adviser and include a strategy for sharing their results with others. Usually, \$150,000 to \$200,000 is available for each region.
- *SARE Professional Development Grants:* To spread the knowledge about sustainable concepts and practices gained from SARE projects, Congress began appropriating funds for professional development for Cooperative Extension Service (CES) staff and other agriculture professionals in 1994. To date, funds have been used for competitive grants and state-specific funding. SARE professional development grants are used for a variety of approaches, ranging from conducting workshops to creating educational videos to hosting on-farm training sessions for extension workers. Successful proposals have ranged from \$10,000 to \$100,000 and from single state to multi-state projects. Proposals that involve both extension personnel and producers are preferred, and partnerships of nonprofit organizations with extension and/or Natural Resource Conservation Service staff are welcome. Professional develop-

ment activities are intended to be "train-the-trainer" programs, with a primary emphasis on CES staff, but they also provide opportunities for NRCS and other field agency staff. Typically, \$300,000 to \$400,000 is available for each region for grants.

Eligibility

Universities, nonprofit organizations, government agency staff, and agricultural producers are eligible for SARE grants.

Uses and Restrictions

The uses and restrictions vary from region to region and from year to year, depending on the specific call for proposals for a given year. Call the regional office for details on the call for proposals.

Contact

Proposal guidelines for each of the grants programs are available from the regional SARE offices or the national program office. Each region solicits proposals and awards grants independently; contact the regional office for applications and deadlines.

North Central Region

13-A Activities Building
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Lincoln, NE 68583-0840
402-472-0265
Email: sare002@unlv.m.unl.edu

Northeast Region

University of Vermont
Hills Building
Burlington, VT 05405-0082
802-656-0471
Email: nesare@zoo.uvm.edu

Southern Region

University of Georgia
Ag Experiment Station
1109 Experiment Street
Griffin, GA 30223-1797
770-412-4787
Email: groland@gaes.griffin.peachnet.edu

Western Region

Utah State University
Ag Science Bldg., Rm. 322
4865 University Blvd.
Logan, UT 84322-4865
801-797-2257
Email: wsare@mendel.usu.edu

SAN works closely with SARE for production and technical assistance support. For technical assistance, please contact:

SAN Coordinator

Alternative Farming Systems Information Ctr
10301 Baltimore Avenue, Room 304
Beltsville, MD 20705-2351
301-504-6425; 301-504-6409 (fax)
Email: san@nal.usda.gov

National Program Office

Director, Sustainable Agriculture Programs
1400 Independence Ave. SW
USDA Mail Stop 2223
Washington, DC 20250-2223
202-720-5203; 202-720-6071 (fax)
Email: ehauhn@reeusda.gov

Internet

www.sare.org

Technology Transfer Program

Information on Commercial Technological Opportunities, Intellectual Property Protection, and Research and Development Partnerships with Private Sector Customers

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is the primary agency within USDA engaged in technology transfer. ARS has delegated authority through its Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) to administer a patent and licensing program for USDA. This program carries out the policy and objectives of federal technology transfer legislation that enables and mandates the use of the patent system to promote the utilization of inventions arising from federally-supported research and development. The primary goal of the OTT program is to ensure that ARS inventions are brought to practical application so that their benefits are available to the public.

The OTT provides a wide-range of technological and industry partnership services to expedite the transfer of ARS technology to the private sector. These include Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADA), Trust Agreements, Material Transfer Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding, and Confidentiality Agreements. A primary vehicle of these government industry partnerships is the CRADA. This program, authorized under the Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986, allows industry to enter contracts with government laboratories. In exchange for this cooperation, the company involved is entitled to first rights to obtain an exclusive license of any inventions that may emerge as a result of the CRADA. The impetus of the CRADA program is the ARS scientist. Researchers and companies work together on the structure of a CRADA, which is then reviewed by OTT's Washington office for ethics questions and consistency with the agency's research mission. Five regionally-based technology transfer coordinators facilitate the negotiation of these industry-government partnerships.

The OTT has been designated by the Department to coordinate the USDA National Patent Program. USDA/ARS has seven patent advisors who assist scientists at approximately 100 laboratories nationwide. Each advisor has a patent committee, which is comprised of ARS scientists. This committee reviews all invention disclosures submitted to the respective patent advisor to determine which shall proceed with patent prosecution based on their commercial potential. The patent advisor develops and files patent applications with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) and in some cases internationally. The patent advisor responds to actions from the PTO and coordinates responses of these actions with USDA inventors.

The OTT also negotiates with the private sector the licensing of USDA patented technologies. License fees and royalties are negotiated on a case by case basis and depend upon several factors including the scope of the rights granted, the size of the potential market and the time and financial investment required by the licensee to bring a product to market. Information provided by the license applicant concerning the product concept, market size, profitability and additional research and development required prior to product introduction is used to determine fair fees and royalties for each invention. Licenses can be granted both exclusively and non-exclusively or by specific field of use, thus enabling a small business to utilize ARS technology for commercial development. Negotiated royalty rates are based upon the anticipated profit margins for the products to be marketed by the licensee.

The OTT plays a critical role in marketing USDA technology by identifying target industries and providing these industries with essential technical and business information on various technology opportunities. Marketing activities are conducted through the development and continued maintenance of a web site to provide industrial customers with essential information on technology transfer programs and commercial opportunities. OTT also exhibits its services at various business and technology conferences, offering individual assistance on technology transfer programs and research areas. Marketing activities also include developing formal partnerships on technology transfer with individual state economic development and agriculture entities. This function allows the OTT to coordinate commercial opportunities with state entities that match a respective state's industry profile and/or needs to enhance the transfer of ARS technology.

Project Examples

The OTT has developed more than 650 CRADAs with the private sector since 1987. Of those, 34 percent are with small business. In 1996, ARS signed 78 CRADAs with the private sector. In addition, approximately 200 active licenses with industry have been granted on ARS-patented technology, with approximately 40 percent licensed to small business. In 1996, ARS granted 28 licenses to the private sector.

- A CRADA with Kirkegaard-Perry Laboratories, Inc. of Gaithersburg, Md., is being used to evaluate an antinucleoprotein enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) to detect avian influenza virus (AIV) infection in chickens.
- A CRADA with Zellweger Uster, Inc., of Knoxville, Tenn., incorporates a new moisture sensor into an existing system of measuring the quality of cotton fiber for the international cotton industry. The moisture sensor was originally developed for the cotton ginning industry, but it also has application in other industries such as textile processing and marketing classification of cotton.

Licenses:

- Separate technologies incorporating beneficial organisms to control the presence of pathogens such as *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* in poultry were licensed to Milk Specialties Inc. of Dundee, Ill., and Continental Grain of Gainesville, Ga. Each company is developing products lines that can be applied to poultry feed to reduce pathogen growth.
- Consep Inc. of Bend, Ore., licensed an ARS patent involving a trapping system for fruit flies. A product will soon be on the market that incorporates a feeding attractant to lure both male and female insects into a trap for effective monitoring and control.

Commercial Products:

- BioSave™—A natural control against fruit rot, this product is currently being manufactured and marketed by the EcoScience Corp. of Orlando, Fla. The control is effective against multiple pathogens and works through a nonchemical barrier mode of action. This product prevents infection of fruit by out-competing pathogens at wound sites on fruit surfaces.
- BioVector-355™, Devour™, VectorMC™—A natural control against pests such as pink boll-

worms, corn earworms and fall army worms, this product is being manufactured and marketed by ThermoTrilogy, Inc. of Columbia, Md. It has been quite successful in the control of pests on golf courses and citrus groves and is an environmental alternative to petroleum-based pesticides. The natural control incorporates the nematode *Steinernema riobravis*, which carries a bacteria that infects the pest larva or pupa and kills the insect within 24 to 48 hours.

- Improved Poultry Vaccination — A patented new method to immunize poultry by injecting vaccines into the egg was exclusively licensed in 1987 to EMBREX Inc., Research Triangle Park, N.C. The ARS technology allowed EMBREX to develop and patent the INOVOJECT™. The INOVOJECT™ can inoculate 20 to 50 thousand hatchery eggs per hour. Today this method protects 65 percent of the U.S. poultry market and 70 percent of the Canadian producers. EMBREX also employs more than 120 people, and recently opened an international operation in London where it has entered the European and African markets. The company is also working on similar arrangements with the Japanese to enter the Asian market.

Information Available

The OTT is USDA's recognized resource for the private sector in obtaining information on technology transfer programs and commercial opportunities available from ARS laboratories. Information includes written and electronic technology summaries of licensable USDA technologies.

Legislative Authority

The Stevenson-Wydler Act of 1980
The Bayh-Dole Act of 1980
The Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986
The National Competitiveness Technology Transfer Act of 1989
The Technology Transfer Improvements Act of 1995

Application and Financial Information

Industries seeking a license to a USDA patent can obtain a license application from the OTT. Generic CRADA boilerplates are also available to private sector customers interested in entering research partnership with an ARS laboratory.

Eligibility

Information on commercial opportunities and technology transfer programs can be provided to anyone upon request. The OTT offers preference to small businesses in obtaining licenses and CRADAs.

Uses and Restrictions

The OTT does not provide financial assistance to the private sector in the development of Cooperative agreements. OTT can assist private sector partners in locating appropriate sources of capital either through other USDA agencies or participating state government incentive programs.

Contact

Private sector customers should contact regionally-based technology transfer coordinators for information on establishing a research collaboration or the OTT licensing specialists.

Technology Transfer Coordinators:

North Atlantic Area

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Room 1036
600 Mermaid Lane
Wyndmoor, PA 19038-8598
(215) 233-6610
e-mail: sfeairheller@arserrc.gov

Southern Area

USDA, ARS, Russell Agricultural Research Center
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Wood in Transportation (WIT) Program

Financial and Technical Assistance for Demonstration and Commercialization of Wood-Based Technology for Transportation

The Forest Service's Wood In Transportation (WIT) program provides financial and technical assistance for demonstration and commercialization of technologies utilizing wood in local transportation networks. Recent advances in wood treatment, engineered wood composite products, and bridge designs make wood a cost-effective alternative material to use for replacing deteriorating bridges. These advances also open the door to a realm of opportunities to add value to underutilized timber species, create new rural timber based industries and improve rural transportation networks. The WIT program introduces people to these opportunities, gives them access to information on the latest technology, and assists them in pioneering efforts that will create new markets and better ways to manage forest resources. The program also awards grants for transportation-related structures that demonstrate new wood technology, or special projects that provide useful information on markets, new products or standard plans.

The National Wood In Transportation Information Center (NWITIC) (formerly known as the Timber Bridge Information Resource Center), located in Morgantown, W.Va., administers the WIT program. The Forest Products Laboratory (FPL), located in Madison, Wis., works closely with the NWITIC to link new research to identified needs, and to customize research results for specific applications. The National Forest System Washington Office and Regional Office Engineering staffs provide support as needed in the development of pilot projects. WIT coordinators are responsible for local program implementation.

For financial assistance, the USDA-Forest Service accepts proposals for vehicular timber bridge projects—structures designed for normal highway use, pedestrian/trail bridge projects—structures for recreational trail activities, commercialization projects, and special projects—with a focus on structurally adequate and economical designs or other types of structures used in transportation applications, such as retaining walls. These projects should focus on advancing one or more of the following objectives: structural adequacy, longevity, serviceability, and economy.

Commercialization Projects were introduced as a new component to the grants program in 1996 to foster the commercialization of modern wood in transportation technology. A key concept of these projects is to develop cooperative partnerships which join public and private entities and promote productive efforts to satisfy local transportation needs and stimulate local economic vitality.

Project Examples

- A Double Diffusion Treatment Plant was cooperatively funded with the Tyonek Native Corporation in Alaska in 1995. This project assisted in developing an innovative preservative treatment facility for local timber species in Alaska. The treatment plant preserves local timber species using a double-diffusion process, which involves double-dipping green lumber in sodium fluoride and copper sulfate. The plant will provide long-term employment for area residents and allow Alaska to decrease its reliance on imported timber. The plant will also supply the lumber for two bridges that are being designed and fabricated on Tyonek land; a third is being developed nearby.

- Meriwether County, Ga., Demonstration Bridge

Project: Meriwether County is a rural county about 60 miles southwest of Atlanta, Ga. The Meriwether County Board of Commissioners used a grant from the USDA Forest Service to build a 40-foot, two-lane vehicular bridge. The bridge's strength and stability were proven when it withstood a 500-year flood in July 1994.

- McCurdy Road Bridge Project, Richland County, Ohio—This project develops designs and methods for the construction of small bridges on rural, lightly traveled county roads. The bridge was installed in 1995 with partial funding by the WIT program, the Richland County Engineer's Office and the Erie Basin Resource Conservation and Development Coun-

cil. The 16-foot timber bridge, which meets the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) design standards, was built and installed by county personnel and equipment.

Information Available

The USDA Forest Service prepared and published a design and construction manual, which can be acquired from the NWITIC. Other publications offered by the Center include *Crossings*, WIT's quarterly newsletter and fact sheets that contain information about completed projects.

Many publications developed by the Forest Products Laboratory, such as Standard Plans for Southern Pine Bridges, Plans for Crash-Tested Bridge Railings for Longitudinal Wood Decks, and a variety of monitoring reports are also available from the NWITIC.

Legislative Authority

Section 1241 of the Forest Stewardship Act of 1990

Application and Financial Information

An application package is developed each year to provide guidelines for applicants. These applications become available in September each year. All proposals must be returned to regional coordinators within the first week of December, and they are evaluated during the last week of January. Formal notification about projects selected for funding are issued in March. Applicants must match funding proposals dollar-for dollar. In most successful proposals, applicants have put in a greater amount. The maximum Forest Service cost-share amount is \$50,000 for vehicular bridge projects, \$10,000 for pedestrian/trail bridge projects, \$150,000 for commercialization projects and \$30,000 for special projects. The Forest Service contribution must be equal to or less than the cooperator's contribution to ensure up to a 50-percent match of federal funds. Matching funds cannot be other federal funds. Funding available for financial and technical assistance for fiscal year 1997 was \$1.2 million.

Eligibility

Local and state governments, and nonprofit organizations are eligible provided the structure is to be built on public lands.

Uses and Restrictions

This funding opportunity is not intended to be a cure for all deficient bridges/ structures, but rather to demonstrate the feasibility of modern timber structures as an economical solution. Proposals to rehabilitate or rebuild covered bridges will not be accepted.

Contact

Northern Region (Northern ID, MT, ND)
(406) 329-3521

Rocky Mountain Region (CO, KS, NE, SD, WY)
(303) 275-5741

Southwestern Region (AZ, NM)
(505) 842-3421

Intermountain Region (Southern ID, NV, UT)
(801) 625-5370

Pacific Southwest Region (CA, HI)
(415) 705-2640

Pacific Northwest Region (OR, WA)
(503) 326-7776

Southern Region (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC,
OK, SC, TN, TX, VA)
(404) 347-7206

Northeastern Area, S&PF
(IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, MO, WI) (612) 649-5246
(CT, ME, MA, NH, NY, RI, VT) (603) 868-7689
(DE, MD, NJ, OH, PA, WV) (304) 285-1530

Alaskan Region (907) 271-2862

National Program Office
Ed Cesa, Acting WIT Director
USDA Forest Service
WIT National Information Center
180 Canfield Street
Morgantown, WV 26505
phone: (304) 285-1651
E-mail: ECesa@mserv.fsl.wvnet.edu

Internet

wit.fsl.wvnet.edu

II. Financing Businesses and New Enterprises

Also see:

Rural Business Enterprise Grants
Intermediary Relending Loan Program
Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants
Rural Venture Capital Demonstration Program

Alternative Agriculture Research and Commercialization Corp. (AARC)

Equity Investments to Help Commercialize Non-Food, Non-Feed, Industrial Products from Agricultural and Forest-Based Materials

The Alternative Agricultural Research and Commercialization Corporation (AARCC), a wholly-owned USDA corporation, is a venture capital firm that makes equity investments in companies to help commercialize biobased industrial (non-food, non-feed) products from agricultural and forestry materials and animal by-products. AARCC makes equity investments in, and forms partnerships with, private firms and nonprofits to commercialize technologies and products that are environmentally friendly and will benefit rural communities. While investment funds are limited, AARCC staff can also provide advice to value-added agriculture or forest-based businesses seeking appropriate sources of capital and assistance from other public and private sources. AARCC is also interested in disseminating information about business opportunities arising from its existing business partners who may have technology available for licensing or who are seeking joint venture partners in other regions.

The AARCC Corporation makes equity investments, such as buying stock or taking a percentage of future sales (royalties) or both. AARCC provides financial assistance at the pre-commercialization and commercialization stages of a project—when costs are often greatest and the ability to obtain funding from traditional business sources is most difficult. AARCC's investments generally help companies secure additional capital from banks and other traditional lending sources. At the pre-commercialization stage, a project is expected to have an identified market. However, additional work may remain before the product enters the marketplace; (e.g., prototype testing or manufacturing, commercial size manufacturing runs, regulatory clearance or market analysis). For those companies in which it makes investments, AARCC facilitates the development of marketing strategies in tandem with technology. For research and development and pre-commercialization, applicants are encouraged to use USDA's Small Business Innovation Research Program. (See description under the Research, Information and New Technologies section.)

Finally, as part of the 1996 Farm Bill, a federal government procurement preference was established for products produced in partnership with the AARCC Corporation.

Project Examples

In its first four years of operation, the AARCC invested \$28 million in federal funds and leveraged \$112 million in private funds in 66 projects in 32 states. Examples of AARCC investments include:

- *Producing Particle Board from Wheat Straw:* A North Dakota firm is the first in the world to produce PrimeBoard™, a high-quality substrate for the panel industry, from 100 percent wheat straw. The product is stronger than normal particle board made from wood fibers and contains no toxic substances. In addition to investing \$1 million in PrimeBoard, AARC helped arrange financing for plant construction and equipment purchase through USDA's Business and Industrial (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program. AARCC staff work closely with RBS staff to

obtain additional financing sources for their customers.

- *Recycled, Renewable Soybean Resin Product Replaces Hardwood:* Phenix Biocomposites of St. Peter, Minn., developed Environ, a composite material made of soybean resin and recycled newspaper. Environ is stronger than wood and looks like granite and can be used in hardwood applications such as flooring and furniture. AARCC invested \$1 million.
- *Environmentally Friendly Replacement for Charcoal:* Indian Creek Mesquite of Brownwood, Texas, developed paraffin-coated mesquite chunks from the native scrub tree and hickory as a replacement for charcoal. The product is so clean that the California Air Resources Board has

exempted it from the standards set for elimination of cooking fuels pollution. AARCC invested \$315,000.

- *Potting Mix From Yard Waste:* Earthgro™ of Glastonbury, Conn., has developed a potting mix to attack root rot. Made of tree bark and animal manure with a natural biocontrol microorganism added at the end of the composting cycle, this product addresses the need for natural solutions to common plant ailments. AARCC invested \$115,000.

Information Available

For a full listing of AARC-funded projects and products, potential business opportunities available, and an informational video, contact the national program office or see the program's website.

Legislative Authority

Subtitle G of title XVI of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (1990 Farm Bill), amended in Section 729 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (1996 Farm Bill).

Application and Financial Information

Applications may be submitted at any time to the national program office. Successful applicants generally receive funds approximately 4-6 months after submission. Applicants first submit a pre-proposal. These pre-proposals are reviewed by the AARCC Board's Due Diligence Subcommittee, which decides which applicants will be asked to submit full proposals. Full proposals undergo evaluation by three outside reviewers and AARCC staff. Based on reviewers' comments, the subcommittee decides whether to conduct a due diligence visit. Following a successful visit, an application is referred to the AARCC's Board of Directors for final approval. The Corporation reports directly to the Secretary of Agriculture. Procedures protect proprietary information throughout the application review and evaluation process.

The AARCC receives an annual appropriation from Congress. While authorized for appropriations of up to \$75 million in the 1996 Federal Agriculture Integration and Reform Act (1996 Farm Bill), fiscal year 1997 funding for recipients was only \$7 million. In addition to appropriations from Congress, AARCC also operates a revolving fund for reinvestment in new projects as old projects pay back. The number and size of awards is limited only by the amount of money available in the fund at any given time. Investments

generally range from \$100,000 to \$1 million. Applicants are expected to bring at least a 1:1 match when seeking funding from the program. However, the private-public ratio is currently approaching 4:1.

Eligibility

Any private individual or company may apply for assistance through the AARC Corporation. Most of AARCC's clients are small, rural-based firms and non-profit organizations or cooperatives. Universities and similar institutions may participate, but their private business partner generally assumes the lead in commercialization activities.

Uses and Restrictions

The AARCC makes equity investments, such as buying stock or taking a percentage of future sales (royalties) or both, in companies for the purpose of helping to commercialize biobased industrial products (non-food, non-feed) from agricultural and forestry materials and animal byproducts. AARCC can supply financial assistance at the pre-commercialization stage, but preference is given to those companies that have marketable products. Preference is also given to projects that benefit rural communities and are environmentally friendly.

Contact

See the website or contact the national program office for application materials and additional information.

National Program Office

Bob Armstrong, Executive Director
AARC/USDA
Room 0156 South Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-0401
202-690-1633
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Business and Industrial (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program

Guarantees Loans by Commercial Lenders to Rural Businesses

The Business and Industrial (B&I) Guaranteed Loan program guarantees loans by commercial local lenders to businesses in rural areas. By guaranteeing loans made by commercial lenders against a portion (up to a maximum of 90%) of loss resulting from borrower default, the B&I Guaranteed Loan program is meant to expand the available credit for businesses. B&I guarantees can result in a number of benefits to such businesses.

The loan guarantee may be used for business and industrial acquisitions, construction, conversion, expansion, repair, modernization, or development costs; purchase of equipment, machinery, or supplies; startup costs and working capital; processing and marketing facilities; pollution control and abatement; and refinancing for viable projects, under certain conditions. The 1996 Farm Bill created another eligible use for B&I Guaranteed loan funds: the purchase of startup cooperative stock for family-sized farms where commodities are produced to be processed by the cooperative. Ineligible loan purposes include: lines of credit, agricultural production which is not part of an integrated business involved in processing of agricultural products, or any project likely to transfer employment from one area to another.

Project Examples

- In Century, Fla., the Alger-Sullivan Lumber Company was granted a B&I loan guarantee of \$10 million to revive a defunct sawmill that is expected to bring 80 jobs to the area. The business intends to establish a niche by specializing and customizing lumber sold and services provided. The principal products and services include drying and dressing lumber products, exporting and importing production of quarter-sawed southern pine and cypress and other high-margin products, and treating and storage of hardwood and pine pulpwood logs.
- In Wahpeton, N.D., PrimeBoard, Inc was granted a B&I loan guarantee of \$8.8 million to finance the total startup costs associated with the production of particle board from wheat straw. This included purchasing real estate, building the factory, and purchasing machinery. PrimeBoard also obtained early stage financing from USDA's Alternative Agriculture Research and Commercialization (AARC) Corporation.
- In Zeeland, Mich., Zeeland Farm Service was granted a B&I loan guarantee for debt refinancing and equipment purchase for a start-up soybean processing plant in the amount of \$8 million. This provides a new value-added product and market for soybean growers within the state of Michigan.
- In West Lebanon, Ind., a borrower was granted a B&I loan guarantee of \$2.4 million to purchase a seed conditioning plant that will result in the creation of 24 new jobs in the county. The company purchases raw seed corn and soybeans, conditions, packages, stores and finally distributes the value-added product to wholesalers and retailers in the U.S. and Europe.

Legislative Authority

Section 310B of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act of 1972, as amended.

Application and Financial Information

As is the case with SBA loan guarantees, the business must first find a bank or lending institution willing to extend a loan subject to a guarantee. The bank then makes a joint application with the borrower to the USDA state or district office of Rural Development. The state office generally has loan approval authority. Applications for loan guarantees over the states' loan approval authority are submitted to the national office. Applications are available throughout the year and are accepted on an ongoing basis. Loan guarantees are to be approved within 60 days subject to the availability of funds. Pre-application reviews and advice are also available through state offices.

The maximum aggregate B&I guaranteed loan(s) amount is \$10 million to any one borrower, although the program administrator can grant up to \$25 million. For loans of \$2 million or less, the maximum percentage of guarantee is 90%; for loans over \$2 million but not over \$5 million, the maximum is 80%; and for loans in excess of \$5 million, the maximum is 70%. Maximum repayment terms are seven years for working capital, 15 years (or useful life) for machinery and equipment, and 30 years for real estate. Collateral must be sufficient to protect the interests of the lender and the government and usually include personal and/or corporate guarantees. A minimum of 10% tangible balance sheet equity is required for existing businesses, and 20% for new businesses. Feasibility studies may be required. The interest rate is negotiated between the lender and borrower and may be fixed or variable. The lender addresses the business adequacy of equity, cash flow, collateral, history, management, and the current status of the industry in a written credit analysis. The funding level for fiscal year 1997 is \$688 million. Lenders are expected to service, and if necessary, liquidate loans, with USDA's Rural Development's concurrence.

Eligibility

B&I loans can be guaranteed in rural areas outside of cities with population of 50,000 or more. Priority is given to applications for loans in rural communities of 25,000 or less. Any legal entity, including individuals, public or private organizations and federally recognized Indian tribal groups, may borrow, except charitable, educational, religious or fraternal institutions or organizations. Local economic development organizations and investors can also be considered. There is no size restriction on the business. Inability to obtain other credit is not a requirement. Authorized lenders include: federal or state chartered banks, credit unions, insurance companies, savings and loan associations, the Farm Credit Bank, and other Farm Credit System institutions with direct lending authority.

Uses and Restrictions

The loan guarantee may be used for business and industrial acquisitions, construction, conversion, expansion, repair, modernization, or development costs; purchase of equipment, machinery, or supplies; startup costs and working capital; processing and marketing facilities; pollution control and abatement; and refinancing for viable projects, under certain conditions. The 1996 Farm Bill created another eligible use for B&I Guaranteed loan funds: the purchase of startup cooperative stock for family-sized farms where commodities are produced to be processed by

the cooperative. Ineligible loan purposes include: lines of credit, agricultural production which is not part of an integrated business involved in processing of agricultural products, or any project likely to transfer employment from one area to another.

Contact

The 47 state offices for USDA's Rural Development Program (formerly the Farmers Home Administration) deliver the B&I program (along with other business and community programs) to potential borrowers and lenders. For more information and applications, contact your state USDA Rural Development office or any Rural Development field office. These offices can also provide contact information for local banks and lending institutions that have experience with the B&I program. Applications are not available through the national program office, but inquiries are welcome.

National Program Office

Dwight Carmon, Division Director
Processing Division
USDA, Rural Business-Cooperative Service
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-0700
202-690-4100

Internet

www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rbcds/html/biloan.htm

Business and Industrial Direct Loan (Direct B&I) Program

Direct Loans to Rural Businesses

The Business and Industrial Direct Loan (Direct B&I) Program is meant to expand the available credit for businesses that do not qualify for conventional bank financing in certain rural areas of the country suffering fundamental and economic stress. The program's primary purpose is to improve, develop or finance business, industry and employment and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities, including pollution abatement and control.

Loans may not be used for agricultural production either directly or for integrated facilities, except for aquaculture, commercial nurseries, forestry, mushrooms, and hydroponics. Businesses engaged in the processing, marketing, or packaging of agricultural (including forest) products are eligible, provided any agricultural production aspect is separate from the rest of the business.

Project Examples

As this program received appropriations in fiscal year 1997 for the first time in over 15 years, there are no recent project examples available. See examples in the B & I Guaranteed Loan program on p. 46.

Legislative Authority

Section 310B of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act of 1972, as amended.

Application and Financial Information

The USDA state or district office of Rural Development makes the loan directly to the applicant. The state office generally has loan approval authority. Applications for loans over \$5 million are submitted to the national office. Applications are available throughout the year and are accepted on an ongoing basis. Loans are to be approved within 60 days subject to the availability of funds. Pre-application reviews and advice are available through state offices.

The maximum aggregate Direct B&I loan(s) amount is \$10 million to any one borrower. Maximum repayment terms are seven years for working capital, 15 years (or useful life) for machinery and equipment, 30 years for real estate, and up to 40 years for community facilities. Collateral must be sufficient to protect the interest of the government and usually include personal and/or corporate guarantees. A minimum of 10 percent tangible balance sheet equity is required for existing busi-

nesses, and 20% for new businesses. Feasibility studies may be required. The interest rate is fixed. Funding available for loans for fiscal year 1997 is \$32 million.

Eligibility

Direct B&I loans can be made in rural areas with populations up to 50,000 that are suffering economic stress. Any legal entity, including individuals, public or private organizations and federally recognized Indian tribal groups, may borrow. Charitable, educational, religious or fraternal institutions or organizations are excluded. Local economic development organizations and investors can also be considered. There is no size restriction on the business. Inability to obtain other credit is a requirement.

Uses and Restrictions

The loan may be used for business and industrial acquisitions, construction, conversion, expansion, repair, modernization, or development costs; purchase of equipment, machinery, or supplies; startup costs and working capital; processing and marketing facilities; pollution control and abatement; and refinancing for viable projects, under certain conditions. Ineligible loan purposes include: lines of credit, tourist or recreation facilities, or any project likely to transfer employment from one area to another. In addition, loans may not be used for agricultural production either directly or for integrated facilities, except for aquaculture, commercial nurseries, forestry, mushrooms, and hydroponics. Businesses en-

gaged in the processing, marketing or packaging of agricultural (including forest) products are eligible, provided any agricultural production aspect is separate from the rest of the business.

Contact

The 47 state offices for USDA's Rural Development (formerly the Farmers Home Administration) deliver the B&I program (along with other business and community programs) to potential borrowers. For more information and applications, contact your state USDA Rural Development Program office or any Rural Development field office. Applications are not available through the national program office, but inquiries are welcome.

National Program Office

Dwight Carmon, Division Director
Processing Division
USDA, Rural Business-Cooperative Service
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-0700
202-690-4100

Internet

[www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rbcds/html/
biloan.htm](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rbcds/html/biloan.htm)

Direct Farm Ownership and Operating Loans

Government Loans to Family Farmers and Ranchers for Farm Ownership and Operating Purposes

The purpose of the Farm Service Agency's (FSA) direct farm ownership (DRO) and operating loan (DOL) programs are to provide financing and assistance to family farmers to establish farms, achieve financial success and graduate to commercial or self-financing. FSA has various tools to assist family farmers, which include low interest rates, and individualized credit counseling and supervision. Emphasis is placed on assisting beginning, minority and other limited-resource family sized farms through regular and low-interest loans and individualized credit counseling and supervision.

Project Examples

- A beginning farmer in Illinois obtained a 4-percent FSA downpayment loan for 30 percent of the purchase price of a home farm, put up 10 percent of the purchase price from family farms, and received a low-interest loan from the Illinois beginning farmers "aggie bond" program for the remaining 60 percent.
- A farmer in Kentucky obtained an FSA operating loan to partially shift production out of a traditional, yet unprofitable cropping pattern and into an alternative enterprise for which there was a specialized local market.
- An African American farmer in Mississippi used an FSA operating loan five-year line of credit to purchase inputs required to produce row crops and livestock, and a seven-year loan to purchase machinery.
- An Idaho farmer received an FSA ownership loan to finance the establishment of buffer strips along a creek running through the farm.

Legislative Authority

The Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act of 1972, as amended.

Application and Financial Information

An applicant applies for a direct operating loan at the FSA (formerly the Farmers Home Administration) county office nearest to the farming operation. If the applicant is certified to be eligible by the local FSA county committee, the FSA credit manager will

meet with the direct loan applicant to assess all aspects of the proposed or existing farming or ranching operation.

Once FSA receives all the financial and organizational information, the applicant or lender will be notified whether the loan or loan guarantee has been approved. The loan recipient must meet certain eligibility requirements, request funds for authorized purposes, have repayment ability, be able to provide enough collateral to secure the loan on at least a dollar-for-dollar basis and enroll in a borrower training program. The number of direct and guaranteed operating loans that FSA can make each year may vary depending on the demand for such loans and the amount of funds appropriated by Congress.

Eligibility

Eligible borrowers must be U.S. citizens, be unable to obtain credit through commercial sources, have sufficient training or experience, have an acceptable credit history, be or becoming owners or operators of family sized farms and be able to demonstrate the need to maximize income from farming. In addition, a DFO borrower must be a beginning farmer or one who has either never received a DFO or has not received a DFO more than 10 years before the date of the proposed loan. A DOL borrower must be a beginning farmer or one who has not received a DOL or not received a DOL more than six years before the date of the proposed loan.

Uses and Restrictions

DFO loans may be used for acquiring or enlarging

a farm or ranch, making capital improvement, paying closing costs and paying for soil and water conservation improvements, including sustainable agriculture practices and systems. DOLs may be used for paying costs for reorganizing a farm or ranch, purchasing livestock or equipment, purchasing supplies, financing conservation costs, paying closing costs, complying with OSHA requirements, tuition for borrower training classes required by FSA, refinancing indebtedness due to a natural disaster, refinancing commercial indebtedness or providing for farm and home needs, including family subsistence.

DOLs are generally for one year, except for equipment loans, which are generally seven years. DOLs also may be five-year lines of credit. Standard DFO loans are 40-year loans, except for special beginning farmer downpayment loans, which are 30-year loans that balloon after 10 years, leading to refinancing as commercial loans. Interest rates are at cost to the government rates for regular loans, one-half cost of money plus 1 percent for certain limited-resource borrowers, and 4 percent for downpayment loans. Loans may be made up to \$200,000.

A portion of available loan funds are reserved for minority farmers and beginning farmers. "Beginning farmer" is defined in part as an applicant who has not operated a farm or ranch for more than 10 years. For beginning farmer ownership loans, borrowers may not already own acreage exceeding 25 percent of the median acreage for farms in the county. In the beginning farmer downpayment loan program, borrowers put up 10 percent of the cost of the purchase, FSA finances 30 percent for 10 years at four percent interest, and the rest of the financial package is owner-financed or from commercial sources, including those made through special state beginning farmer programs available in many states.

Loans for conservation may be used for installation of conservation structures, establishment of forest cover or permanent pasture, conversion to sustainable agriculture production systems and other purposes consistent with conservation, integrated farm management, water quality or wildlife habitat plans.

Contact

FSA is organized on a national, state and county basis. Applicants apply directly through the county or area office. Individuals can locate the nearest FSA office by checking in the telephone white pages under U.S. Government, Department of

Agriculture, Farm Service Agency.

National Program Office

James F. Radintz, Director

Farm Service Agency

Farm Loan Programs Loan Making Division

14th & Independence Avenue, SW, Stop 0522

Washington D.C. 20250-0522

202-720-1632

Internet

www.fsa.usda.gov

Guaranteed Farm Ownership and Operating Loans

Federally Guaranteed Loans for Family Farmers for Farm Ownership and Operating Purposes, Including the Purchase of Stock in Cooperatives

The purpose of Farm Service Agency's (FSA) guaranteed farm ownership (GFO) and guaranteed operating loan (GOL) programs are to help family farmers obtain commercial credit to establish or maintain a family farm or ranch. FSA guarantees the repayment of the commercial loan at 90 percent of its value or 95 percent in the case of loans to refinance an existing direct farm ownership or operating loan or for loans made in conjunction with a beginning farmer downpayment loan.

Farmers also may use FSA guaranteed loans to purchase stock in a member-owned cooperative. The cooperatives can be engaged in production, processing, packaging and/or marketing of agricultural and forest products.

In some instances, a special interest rate assistance program may be used in which FSA provides assistance to bring down the interest rate by a percent or two. The interest assistance is designed in part to assist direct loan borrowers graduate to commercial credit.

Project Examples

- A beginning farmer working with a bank in Iowa obtained a 95-percent loan guarantee for an ownership loan and operating loan made in conjunction with an FSA downpayment loan, enabling the bank to make a loan it would not without the federal participation.
- A rancher in California used an FSA guaranteed loan to purchase stock in a newly formed marketing cooperative that processes and sells specially raised beef to Japan.
- A commercial lender in Ohio obtained an FSA guarantee on an operating loan to a farmer who will use integrated pest management (IPM) on a new agricultural enterprise. The guarantee was important to the lender, who was not familiar with IPM.

normally would work with a local commercial lenders that make agricultural loans in their community. The lender will analyze the farm customer's business plan and financial condition. If the farm loan proposal looks realistic, financially feasible and there is sufficient collateral, but it cannot be approved because it does not meet the lending institution's loan underwriting standards, the lender may apply for an FSA loan guarantee. In some cases, applicants may seek an FSA direct loan first, but a guaranteed loan must always be considered before a direct loan can be provided. Once applicants provide all the financial and organizational information to their lender, the lender submits a guaranteed loan application to the local FSA office and the request will be approved or disapproved within 30 days.

Farm customers must meet FSA eligibility requirements, request funds for authorized purposes, have repayment ability, and be able to provide enough collateral to secure the loan on at least a dollar for dollar basis. The number of guaranteed loans that FSA can provide each year varies depending on (1) the demand for loan guarantees, and (2) the amount of guarantee authority appropriated by Congress.

Legislative Authority

The Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act of 1972, as amended.

Application and Financial Information

Applicants apply for agricultural loans as they

Eligibility

An applicant must meet several eligibility requirements, which are summarized as follows:

- (1) U.S. citizen or permanent resident,
- (2) able to incur legal obligations,
- (3) sufficient training or experience to be successful in the operation,
- (4) acceptable credit history, taking into account financial difficulties beyond the applicant's control,
- (5) not delinquent on any Federal debt,
- (6) unable to obtain commercial credit, and
- (7) not larger than a family size operation, which is based on the standards of the local community. The local FSA county committee is responsible for making eligibility determinations and all decisions may be appealed to the National Appeals Division.

Uses and Restrictions

The maximum amount that an individual may receive is \$400,000 for operating purposes and \$300,000 for farm ownership purposes. For operating purposes, authorized loan purposes include:

- (1) payment of costs associated with reorganizing a farm to improve its profitability,
- (2) purchase of livestock, equipment, quotas and bases,
- (3) cooperative stock for credit, production, processing and marketing purposes,
- (4) payment of annual operating expenses,
- (5) payment of costs for land and water development for conservation or use purposes,
- (6) payment of loan closing costs,
- (7) payment of training required or recommended by FSA,
- (8) payment of other farm and home needs, and
- (9) refinancing of debt subject to certain restrictions.

For farm ownership purposes, authorized purposes include: (1) Acquiring or enlarging a farm, (2)

making capital improvements, (3) promoting soil and water conservation and protection, (4) payment of loan closing costs, and (5) debt refinancing.

Contact

FSA is organized on a national, state and county basis. However, guaranteed applications are only accepted and processed in county offices. Individuals should contact an agricultural lender but may also contact the nearest FSA county office by checking in the telephone white pages under U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency. In some cases, the former agency (Farmers Home Administration or Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service) listings may still be shown.

National Program Office

James F. Radintz, Director
Farm Service Agency
Farm Loan Programs Loan Making Division
14th & Independence Ave., SW, Stop 0522
Washington D.C. 20250-0522
202-720-1632

Internet

www.fsa.usda.gov

Intermediary Relending Loan Program (IRP)

Loans for Establishing Revolving Loan Funds to Provide Financing for Rural Businesses and Community Development

The Intermediary Relending Loan Program (IRP) provides direct loans at 1 percent interest to intermediaries for establishing revolving loan funds for small businesses and community development projects in rural areas. Intermediaries are nonprofit organizations or public agencies that relend money through loan pools to ultimate recipients, who are businesses, individuals and others.

Final recipients of loans from IRP revolving loan funds involved in agricultural production are not eligible. However, businesses processing, packaging and marketing agricultural products will be considered.

Project Examples

- As part of the Pacific Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative, an IRP loan of \$1.5 million supplemented an existing revolving loan fund for relending to small businesses in rural Jackson and Josephine Counties in Oregon. Businesses that create or retain permanent jobs involving skills related to manufacturing, industrial production, and wood products are given preference. The Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc., the intermediary, estimates that by targeting a maximum of \$20,000 per full-time equivalent job created or saved, the IRP loan will create or save at least 50 jobs in the fund's first round of loans in these communities.
- The North Kennebec Regional Planning Commission in Maine made a \$150,000 working capital loan to KD Wood Products out of its revolving loan fund, created with a \$2 million IRP loan. KD Wood Products buys lumber from local sawmills and processes it into about 200 different products, including unfinished furniture and lawn and garden items, such as fences, edging, and planters. KD used the loan to expand its operations and create new jobs.
- In Salem, Ore., BC Hop Farms, Ltd. received a loan from the local revolving loan fund established with IRP funds. BC Hop Farms provides processing facilities for local farmers who grow hops and contract with breweries for sale of their processed hops. The loan was used for building construction and purchase of equipment to expand existing facilities, providing capacity to process a larger volume of hops.

- American Cedar, Inc., of Arkadelphia, Ark., received loans of \$225,000 from a local revolving loan fund, partially funded by IRP. American Cedar produces dimensioned lumber, finished lumber, finished panels, closet accessories, decorative moth repellents, and custom products for the domestic and international markets. Wood shavings from the manufacturing process are also sold to local horse stables.

Legislative Authority

Section 1323 of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended

Application and Financial Information

Intermediaries with experience and expertise running revolving loan funds make applications to the national office of RBS. The USDA state offices of Rural Development generally are delegated loan approval authority on a case-by-case basis. Applications are considered in a quarterly national competition. Loans to intermediaries range from \$100,000 to \$2 million. Intermediaries receive a 30-year loan with a fixed annual interest rate of one percent. Funding available for fiscal year 1997 is \$37 million.

Loans made by intermediaries from the revolving loan fund are limited to \$150,000 per ultimate recipient. Intermediaries develop their own application procedures for ultimate recipients. Factors considered in judging applications from intermediaries include: financial condition, assur-

ance of repayment ability, equity, collateral, experience and record of managing a loan program or providing other assistance to rural businesses, ability to leverage with funds from other sources, extent assistance would flow to low-income persons.

Eligibility

Nonprofit corporations, public agencies, Native American tribes, and cooperatives are eligible to receive IRP funds as intermediaries. Intermediaries must have adequate legal authority and a proven record of successfully assisting rural businesses and industries. The ultimate recipients of loans from IRP revolving loan funds can be for-profit organizations, individuals, and public and private nonprofit organizations, and must be located in unincorporated areas or cities with populations under 25,000. Both intermediaries and ultimate recipients must be unable to obtain the loan at reasonable rates and terms through commercial credit or other federal, state, or local programs.

Uses and Restrictions

Final recipients of loans from IRP revolving loan funds involved in agricultural production are not eligible. However, businesses processing, packaging and marketing agricultural products will be considered. Intermediaries may not use IRP funds to finance more than 75 percent of the cost of an ultimate recipient's project or for a loan of more than \$150,000 to one ultimate recipient.

Contact

For a list of intermediaries and their service areas, more detailed information, or an application, please contact your USDA state or district office of Rural Development (formerly the Farmers Home Administration).

National Program Office
Wayne Stansbery
Rural Business-Cooperative Service
Specialty Lenders Division
1400 Independence Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20250-1521
Email: wstansbe@rus.usda.gov

Internet

www.usda.gov/biloan.htm

Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG)

Grants for Assisting Small and Emerging Rural Businesses to Nonprofits and Public Bodies

The purpose of the Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) program is to finance and facilitate the development of small and emerging private business enterprises located in rural areas through grants to public bodies, nonprofits, and federally recognized Indian Tribal groups. This includes starting and operating revolving loan funds, business incubators, and industrial parks. In addition, costs that may be paid from grant funds include the acquisition and development of land and the construction of buildings, plants, equipment, access streets and roads, parking areas, and utility and service extensions; refinancing; fees for professional services; technical assistance and training associated with technical assistance; startup operating costs and working capital, providing financial assistance to a third party; production of television programs to provide information to rural residents; and creating, expanding, and operating rural distance learning networks.

Project Examples

BEG has funded the development and building of farmers markets in several states.

- In Vermont, the Economic Development Council and the University of Vermont each received a grant of \$250,000 to fund community kitchen/ incubator facilities for use by small and emerging food processing businesses for developing and testing new uses of their products, packaging/ canning, and distribution activities.
- In Oregon, the city of Depoe Bay received a grant of \$50,000 to renovate and repair a dock and an existing vacant building on the bay front that will be rented to a private business to operate a value-added seafood processing facility. The project will provide expanded job opportunities for both displaced timber workers and fishermen.
- In Mississippi, Alcorn State University received a \$450,000 grant to develop and build a centralized vegetable processing facility to be used by small farm families.

Legislative Authority

Section 310B of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act of 1972.

Application and Financial Information

Applicants are required to submit supporting data before a formal application is made. After determining the order of funding priorities, RBS will tentatively determine eligibility and request applicants to submit formal applications. Application forms are available from and may be filed in any state USDA Rural Development office, but applications are usually processed in a district or area office. Grant amounts are based on need and available appropriate funds. The funding level in fiscal year 1997 is \$41 million.

Eligibility

The RBEG program is for non-profits and public bodies to assist small and emerging businesses in rural areas outside the boundary of a city of 50,000 or more and their immediately adjacent urbanized or urbanizing areas. Eligible recipients for this grant are public bodies, private nonprofit corporations, and federally recognized Indian Tribal Groups. Public bodies include incorporated towns and villages, boroughs, townships, counties, states, authorities, districts, and Native American Tribes on federal and state reservations, and other federally recognized Indian Tribal groups in rural areas. Small and emerging businesses with 50 or fewer new employees and less than \$1 million in gross annual revenues are eligible for assistance.

Uses and Restrictions

While RBEG funds cannot be used for agricultural production (through growing, cultivation, and harvesting either directly or through horizontally integrated operation) they can be used for commercial nurseries, timber operations, limited agricultural production related to technical assistance projects, and teaching agriculture production to small and emerging businesses.

RBEG funds can be used for value-added purposes

associated with agriculture such as processing and marketing, as long as the production component is clearly separate. Grants cannot be used for comprehensive area wide planning; loans by grantees with unreasonable terms, rates, and charges; development of a proposal that could pull business activity or jobs away from one area to another; development of a proposal that could result in an area with too many goods or materials and not enough demand.

All community projects funded are subject to an environmental assessment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. Applicants for grants to establish a revolving loan fund must include detail on the applicant's experience operating a revolving loan program, proposed projects, applicant's financial ability to operate a revolving fund, and plans for leveraging.

Contact

To receive more information or an application form, please contact one of the 47 state offices for USDA's Rural Development (formerly the Farmers Home Administration) where the project is located.

National Program Office

Carole Boyko
Amy Cavanaugh
USDA, Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS)
Specialty Lenders Division
Room 5404 South Building
Stop 1521
Washington, D.C. 20250
202-720-1400

Internet

www.usda.gov/agency/rbcds/html/biloan

Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG)

Grants to Nonprofits and Public Bodies for Community Planning, Technical Assistance and Training for Rural Businesses

The Rural Business Opportunity Grants program (RBOG) was created by the 1996 Farm Bill to assist in the economic development of rural areas by providing grants to assist business and community development. Grant funds may be used to:

- Identify and analyze business opportunities, including export markets, that will use local natural and human resources;
 - Identify, train, and provide technical assistance to existing or prospective rural entrepreneurs and managers;
 - Establish business support centers and otherwise assist in the creation of new rural businesses;
 - Conduct local community or multi-county economic development planning;
 - Establish centers for training, technology, and trade that will provide training to rural businesses in the utilization of interactive communications technologies to develop international trade opportunities and markets;
 - Conduct leadership development training of existing or prospective rural entrepreneurs and managers; and
 - Pay reasonable fees and charges for professional services necessary to conduct the technical assistance, training or planning functions.
-

Project Examples

As this new program was just established under the 1996 Farm Bill, no project examples are available at this time.

Legislative Authority

Section 741 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (1996 Farm Bill).

Application and Financial Information

Regulations and application materials are in the process of being developed for this new program. Applications will be solicited annually and scored according to defined selection criteria, to include: likelihood of project being effective, innovative, applicant experience, transferability of project to other rural areas, ability to improve economic conditions, geographical distribution, and interagency cooperation. Total grant funds available for fiscal year 1997 are only \$755,000.

Eligibility

Eligible recipients for this competitive grants program will be public bodies, nonprofit corporations, Native American tribes, and cooperatives.

Uses and Restrictions

Grants may be made only when there is a reasonable prospect that the project will result in the economic development of a rural area and must be consistent with local and area wide strategic plans for community activities in the project area.

Contact

When the regulations and application materials for this new program are completed, more detailed information and applications will be available through the 47 state offices for USDA's Rural Development Program (formerly the Farmers Home Administration). Inquiries may also be directed to the national program office.

National Program Office

Wayne Stansbery

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Specialty Lenders Division

1400 Independence Ave, SW, Stop 1521

Washington, D.C. 20250-1521

202-720-1400

Email: wstansbe@rus.usda.gov

Internet

www.usda.gov/agency/rbcds/html/biloan

Introduction to the U.S. Small Business Administration

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) was created in 1953 as an agency of the federal government to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small businesses, to preserve free competitive enterprise, and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of the United States.

To meet these goals the SBA works with banks, intermediaries, and other lending institutions to provide loans and venture capital financing to small businesses unable to secure financing through normal lending channels.

The SBA defines small businesses as companies whose net worth is \$18 million or less and whose average net (after-tax) income for the preceding two years does not exceed \$6 million.

The majority of SBA's financial assistance in the form of loan guarantees. The SBA itself does not provide direct loans or grants to small businesses. The SBA also supports other organizations which provide loans, management training and services for small businesses (see Section III. Management Assistance: SCORE and SBDCs.) In general, the SBA defines small businesses as companies whose net worth is \$18 million or less and whose average net (after-tax) income for the preceding two years does not exceed \$6 million.

SBA offices operate in many major cities. To locate your local SBA office, look under "U.S. Government" in the telephone book or call the SBA Answer Desk at (800) 827-5722 (or 800 8-ASK-SBA. To send a fax to the SBA, dial (202) 205-7064. For the hearing impaired, the TDD number is (704) 344-6640.

SBA OnLine electronic bulletin board - modem and computer required:

(800) 697-4636 (limited access)

(900) 463-4636 (full access)

(202) 401-9600 (D.C. metro area)

Internet using uniform resource locators (URLs):

SBA Home Page: <http://www.sba.gov>

SBA gopher: <gopher://gopher.sba.gov>

File transfer protocol: <ftp://ftp.sba.gov>

Telnet to SBA Online BBS: <telnet://sbaonline.sba.gov>

U.S. Business Advisor: <http://www.business.gov>

If you do not have access to the Internet, you can request a publication called "SBA Profile: Who We Are & What We Do" by writing or calling your local chapter or contacting SBA's national office at:

U.S. Small Business Administration
Office of Marketing & Customer Service
409 Third Street, SW, Suite 7600
Washington, DC 20416
202-205-6744; 202-205-6913 (fax)

Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR)

Grants for Feasibility Studies and Product Research and Development to Small Businesses

Eleven federal agencies grant SBIR funds. The USDA's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program makes grants that are competitively awarded for feasibility studies and product research and development to qualified small businesses. SBIR funds support high quality research proposals containing advanced concepts related to important scientific problems and opportunities in agriculture and forest products that could lead to significant public benefit if the research is successful. Objectives of the SBIR Program are to stimulate technological innovations in the private sector, strengthen the role of small businesses in meeting Federal research and development needs, increase private sector commercialization of innovations derived from USDA-supported research and development efforts, and foster and encourage participation by women-owned and socially and economically disadvantaged small business firms in technological innovations. Research topic categories of the SBIR program include: Forest and Related Resources; Plant Production and Protection; Animal Production and Protection; Air, Water and Soils; Food Science and Nutrition; Rural and Community Development; Aquaculture; Industrial Applications; and Marketing and Trade.

The SBIR grant program is divided into two phases, Phase I and Phase II. Phase I grants support technical feasibility studies. Phase II grants provide financial assistance for Phase I projects to enter the development stage to the point of commercialization. Businesses are encouraged to pursue Phase III—commercialization—through other sources as SBIR does not provide funding for expansion, marketing, and application of the developed technology. One possible funding source for commercialization within USDA is the Alternative Agriculture Research and Commercialization (AARC) Corporation. (See entry in "Financing" section.)

The U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Innovation, Research, and Technology (202/205-6450; Internet: www.sbaonline.sba.gov) oversees the SBIR program across the federal government. Other federal departments that may have relevant SBIR programs include the National Science Foundation (703/306-1390), the Department of Energy (301/903-5867), and the Environmental Protection Agency (202/260-7899).

Project Examples

Phase I

- *Fresh Peeled Chestnuts:* In Carrollton, Ohio, the Empire Chestnut Company was awarded a \$50,000 grant to study a simple impact peeling process that will produce a value-added chestnut product--fresh peeled chestnuts. The present market volume of chestnuts is rather small and dominated by imported, in-shell chestnuts which often reach the consumer in poor condition and are tedious to peel by hand. The objectives of the study were to improve chestnut preconditioning and the peeling device for maximum peeling with minimal kernel damage and to develop handling methods to obtain at least a two-week shelf life.

- *Snowmobile Trail Grooming:* Somero Enterprises, Inc., a small company in Houghton, Mich., developed the idea of "Fostering Rural Economic Development Using New Concepts in Snowmobile Trail Grooming." The feasibility study of the

same title was awarded a \$50,000 grant for an 18 month study. As recreation and tourism have become a major part of the economic stability in rural areas over the past decade, more and more businesses have looked into different kinds of trail grooming. Snowmobiling has become a major winter pastime with considerable income for local hotels, restaurants, markets and other establishments. A trail groomer that would enhance the physical properties of individual snow crystals would cause increased durability for the trail, decreasing set up time, and lengthening the snowmobiling season.

- *Advanced Ceramics Using Rice Husks:* Under the Industrial Applications heading, the SBIR program awarded a grant of \$50,000 to Nanomaterials Research Corporation in Tucson, Arizona. The proposal was for developing a process to produce advanced ceramics cost effectively using agricultural raw products, such

as rice husk. Potential commercial applications of advanced ceramics include: structural, mechanical, electrical, optical, catalytic, magnetic, sensor, etc. The company, during Phase I will demonstrate the proof-of-concept.

Phase II

- *Cane-Based Syrup for Small-Scale Limited Resource Farmers:* In Boligee, Alabama, Hall's Homemade Syrup was awarded an SBIR grant for \$190,000 over a 24 month period to develop syrup production for small-scale limited resource farmers. A major problem for rural communities in the Alabama Black Belt is finding a high value crop and associated products that can be processed by the small, limited resource farmers in the region. This research proposed taking a cultural practice, cane-based syrup, and refining its production and developing value-added products from the ribbon cane.
- *Grass Forage Cropping:* The G&G Hay and Black Ram Engineering companies of Princeton, Idaho developed a research project to look into forage-based agriculture on the sloping, highly erodible terrain in northern Idaho. Phase I research showed that central Idaho can produce grass forage products which are competitive in regional and export markets. Commercial grass forage cropping has the potential to serve as an economic engine in a manner similar to other grass forage areas in central Washington, the Columbia River Basin and west central Oregon. These areas have developed vibrant economies using commercial grass forage cropping as an alternative agricultural enterprise.

Information Available

The program solicitation, proposal preparation instructions, evaluation criteria, considerations, information sources, research topic descriptions, technical abstracts, and information on upcoming national conferences are available on SBIR's website.

Legislative Authority

Small Business Innovation Development Act of 1982, as amended.

Application and Financial Information

Phase I grants are for six months and will not exceed \$65,000 beginning fiscal year 1998. Phase II grants are for 24 months, and do not exceed \$250,000. The average grant award for a Phase II study is \$210,000. Per-

mission for extended studies may be granted.

Applications in the form of program solicitations are generally available and open in early June and close in early September. Pre-applications and proposals are not accepted, but advice may be sought from the national program office.

Eligibility

To be eligible for either Phase I or Phase II grants, the primary employer of the principal investigator must be a small business, which can include small farms. A small business is defined under Section 2.2 of the Program Solicitation. Briefly, though, a small business must be independently-owned, with at least 51 percent owned or for purposes of publicly owned businesses, 51 percent of its voting stock must be owned by United States citizens or lawfully admitted permanent resident aliens. The business can employ not more than 500 employees (full time, part-time, temporary, or other). Recipients of SBIR Phase I grants are the only eligible contenders for an SBIR Phase II grant. Phase I grantees are eligible for Phase II applications, and the Phase I winner must have been awarded the grant within two years of applying for a Phase II grant.

Uses and Restrictions

For both Phase I and Phase II, the grantee must be considered a small business at the time of grant award.

Contact

Application materials, known as the Program Solicitation, and further information is available on SBIR's website or by contacting the national program office.

National Program Office

Charles Cleland, Director SBIR Program
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, USDA, Ag Box 2243
Washington, D.C. 20250-2243
202-401-4002 or Ruth Lange: 202-401-1839;
202-401-6070 (fax)
Email: ccleland@reeusda.gov

Internet

www.reeusda.gov/new/sbir/sbir.htm

7(a) Loan Guaranty Program

Guaranteed Loans to Small Businesses Unable to Secure Financing on Reasonable Terms through Normal Lending Channels; Operates through Private-Sector Lenders that Provide Loans Guaranteed by the SBA

Section 7(a) of the Small Business Act authorizes the Small Business Administration (SBA) to guarantee loans to small businesses that cannot obtain financing on reasonable terms through normal lending channels. The SBA basic guaranty program is designed to promote small business formation and growth by guaranteeing long-term loans to qualified firms. Loans are available for many business purposes, such as real estate, expansion, equipment, working capital or inventory. The SBA can guarantee 75 percent of the loan amount up to \$750,000. For loans of \$100,000 or less, the guaranty rate is 80 percent. The interest rate is not to exceed 2.75 over the prime lending rate. Maturities are up to 10 years for working capital and up to 25 years for fixed assets.

The 7(a) Program is the largest of the SBA's financial assistance programs, handling more than 80 percent of all SBA business lending activity. In addition to general financing, the 7(a) program encompasses a number of the SBA's specialized loan programs:

- **Basic 7(a):** Guarantees long-term loans to small businesses that cannot obtain financing on reasonable terms through normal lending channels for uses such as real estate, expansion, equipment, working capital or inventory.
- **LowDoc:** Designed to reduce the paperwork involved in loan requests of \$100,000 or less. The SBA uses a one-page application and relies on the strength of the individual applicant's character and credit history. The applicant must first satisfy all of the lender's requirements; then the lender may request a LowDoc guaranty.
- **FA\$TRAK:** FA\$TRAK encourages participating banks to use their own documentation and procedures to approve, service and liquidate loans of up to \$100,000. In return, the SBA agrees to guarantee up to 50 percent of each loan. This is a pilot program with selected banks nationwide.
- **CAPLines:** Finances small business short-term, cyclical working-capital needs. There are five distinct short-term working capital loans: the Seasonal, Contract, Builder's, Standard Asset-Based, and Small Asset-Based lines. Most SBA regulations governing the 7(a) Program also govern this program. SBA generally can guarantee up to \$750,000.
- **International:** Offers long-term financing to small businesses working or preparing to work in international trade, as well as those businesses adversely affected by import competition.
- **Export:** Provides short-term working capital to exporters in a combined working effort of the SBA and the Export-Import Bank.
- **Women's and Minority Prequalification Loans:** A pilot loan program enabling the SBA to prequalify a guaranty for loans of \$250,000 or less before the business owner goes to a bank.

The 7 (a) Program consists of three types of loans: Guaranteed, Direct and Immediate Participation loans.

Guaranteed Loans are made and disbursed by private lenders and guaranteed by the SBA. Direct Loans are available only to borrowers who are unable to obtain lender participation loans. Immediate Participation Loans are those made jointly by SBA and private lenders with either making the loan and the other participant purchasing its agreed-upon share of the loan. Immediate participation loans are permissible subject to funding availability, only when a guaranty loan is unavailable. Amounts of each vary.

Repayment ability from the cash flow of the business is a primary consideration in the SBA loan decision process. Good character, management capability, collateral, and owner's equity contribution are also important considerations. All owners of 20 percent or more are required to personally guarantee SBA loans.

Project Examples

A policy of client confidentiality prevents SBA staff from providing examples of loan projects. You can obtain a free copy of "The Resource Directory for Small Business Management," a listing of publications and videotapes available for purchase, from your local SBA office or the SBA Answer Desk (see Contact section below).

Eligibility

The vast majority of businesses are eligible for financial assistance from the SBA. Applicant businesses must operate for profit; be engaged in, or propose to do business in the United States or its possessions; have reasonable owner equity to invest; and must have used alternative financial resources including personal assets.

Ineligible businesses are those which are engaged in illegal activities, loan packaging, speculation, multi-sales distribution, gambling, investment or lending, or where the owner is on parole. Also ineligible are the following types of businesses: real estate investment; speculative activities; academic schools; pyramid sales plans; illegal activities; charitable or religious activities, or nonprofit institutions.

The Small Business Act defines an eligible small business as one that is independently owned and operated and not dominant in its field of operation. This can vary from industry to industry. Size standards which define the maximum size of an eligible small business are as follows:

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Size</u>
Retail and Service	\$3.5 - \$13.5 million
Construction	\$7 - \$17 million
Agriculture	\$0.5 - \$3.5 million
Wholesale	No > than 100 employees
Manufacturing	500 to 1,500 employees

Size eligibility should be discussed with the local SBA office staff. Also note that the standards for a particular business may change from time to time and some exceptions do apply.

The proceeds of SBA loans can be used for most business purposes, including the purchase of real

estate to house business operations; construction, renovation or leasehold improvements; acquisition of furniture, fixtures, machinery, and equipment; purchase of inventory; and working capital.

Loan proceeds may not be used to: finance floor plan needs; purchase real estate where the participant has issued a forward commitment to the builder/developer, or where the real estate will be held primarily for investment purposes; make payments to owners or pay delinquent withholding taxes; or pay existing debt unless it can be shown that the refinancing will benefit the small business and that the need to refinance is not indicative of imprudent management. (Proceeds can never be used to reduce the exposure of the participant in the loans being refinanced.)

Uses and Restrictions

SBA loans can be used for most business purposes including establishing a new business, purchasing inventory, furniture and fixtures, machinery, equipment, buying land for construction, building, financing leasehold improvements, real property, and for use as working capital. In some cases, proceeds may be used for financing certain types of debt. Some restrictions and special circumstances exist.

Contact

Check the telephone directory under "U.S. Government" for the nearest SBA office or call the Small Business Answer Desk 1-(800) 8-ASK-SBA or (202) 205-7064. For the hearing impaired the TDD number is (202) 205-7333.

SBA OnLine- electronic bulletin board - modem and computer required
(800) 697-4636 (limited access)
(900) 463-4636 (full access)
(202) 401-9600 (D.C. metro only)

Internet

<http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/>

7(a) Program: http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/business_finances/7aloan.html

504 Certified Development Company (504 CDC) Program (SBA)

Assists in the Formation and Expansion of Small Businesses; Stimulates Creation of Jobs and Provides Fixed Asset Financing to Small Firms for the Construction or Rehabilitation of Owner-Occupied or Leased Premises

The 504 Certified Development Company (504 CDC) Program of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) makes loans available to growing businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing for major fixed assets through SBA Certified Development Companies. Loans can be used to acquire land, buildings, machinery and equipment; and for building, modernizing, renovating or restoring existing facilities and sites. Certified Development Companies are private, nonprofit corporations whose purpose is to contribute to the economic development of their communities or regions by assisting small businesses. There are about 290 CDCs nationwide.

Although the total size of projects using CDC financing is unlimited, the maximum amount of CDC participation in any individual project is usually \$750,000. Typical projects range in size from \$500,000 to \$2 million with the average project totaling \$1 million. The minimum CDC participation in any project is typically \$50,000, although \$25,000 projects can be approved under special circumstances.

Project Examples

A policy of client confidentiality prevents SBA staff from providing examples of loan projects.

Application and Financial Information

Initial contact should be made through a local Certified Development Company (see "Contact" below).

Interest rates are based on the current market rate for five- and 10-year U.S. Treasury issues, plus an increment above the Treasury rate, based on market conditions. Maturities of 10 and 20 years are available. Repayment is made in monthly, level-debt installments.

Collateral may include a mortgage on the land and the building being financed, liens on machinery, equipment and fixtures, and lease assignments. Private sector lenders are secured by a first lien on the project. The SBA is secured by a second lien. The SBA also requires personal guaranties from all persons who own 20 percent or more of the company that is financed by a CDC. Generally the project assets being financed are used as collateral.

SBA regulations specify limits on fees that must be paid in connection with SBA funding.

Eligibility

To be eligible, a business must be a for-profit corporation, partnership or proprietorship. Under the 504 Program, the business qualifies if its net worth does not exceed \$6 million, and its average net profit after taxes does exceed \$2 million in the previous two years. Loans cannot be made to businesses engaged in speculation, investment in rental real estate, gambling, lending or nonprofit concerns.

Uses and Restrictions

Loan proceeds may be used for fixed asset projects such as: purchasing existing buildings; purchasing land; and land improvements such as grading, street improvements, utilities, parking lots and landscaping; construction; modernizing, renovating or converting existing facilities; purchasing machinery and equipment; financing a construction contingency fund; paying interest on interim financing; and paying professional fees directly attributable to the project, such as surveying, engineering, architect, appraisal, legal and accounting fees.

The 504 Program cannot be used for working capital or inventory, consolidating or repaying debt, refinancing, or financing a plant not located in the U.S., its territories and possessions.

Contact

Local Certified Development Companies can be identified by contacting your local Chamber of Commerce or economic development authority in your city, county, or state government. You may also call any SBA District office for assistance in locating a Certified Development Company.

Check the telephone directory under "U.S. Government" for the nearest SBA office or:

Telephone inquiries- Small Business Answer Desk 1-(800) 8-ASK-SBA or (202) 205-7064. For the hearing impaired the TDD number is (202) 205-7333.

SBA OnLine- electronic bulletin board - modem and computer required

(800) 697-4636 (limited access)
(900) 463-4636 (full access)
(202) 401-9600 (D.C. metro only)

Internet

CDC Program: [http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/
business_finances/cert.html](http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/business_finances/cert.html)

SBA Home Page: <http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/>

MicroLoan Program

Short-Term Loans for Financing Inventory, Purchasing Equipment, Machinery, and Fixtures, Seeking Leasehold Improvements, Providing Working Capital or Receiving Technical Assistance

The MicroLoan Program was developed to increase the availability of very small loans to prospective small business borrowers. Under this program, the SBA makes funds available to nonprofit intermediaries, who in turn make loans to eligible borrowers.

Project Examples

Client confidentiality does not permit the SBA or non-profit lenders to release information to the public on specific projects.

Application and Financial Information

Loans range in amounts from under \$100 to a maximum of \$25,000. The average loan size is \$10,000. Completed applications can often be processed by the intermediary in less than one week; loan applicants can expect an answer from the SBA approved intermediary lender within 15 days from the date of application acceptance.

Each nonprofit lending organization has its own loan requirements, but must take as collateral any assets bought with the loan. In most cases, the personal guarantees of the business owners are also required.

Depending on the earnings of the business, the loan maturity may be as long as six years. Rates are pegged to no more than four (4) percent over the prime rate.

Microloan Funds became available in August 1992. During fiscal year 1996, over \$13.0 million was loaned by intermediaries to microenterprises. The average loan amount was \$9,073.

Eligibility

Virtually all types of for-profit businesses that meet SBA basic requirements are eligible. Personal assets and other sources of financing must be used first.

Lending decisions under this program are made primarily on the basis of credit history and personal character of the applicant. Personal guarantees of the principal owners of the business are required.

Loans must be adequately secured, usually by business or personal assets, but loans are not necessarily declined if inadequate collateral is the only unfavorable factor.

Uses and Restrictions

Loans may be used for most types of small-scale financing of small businesses. Loans may not be used to pay existing debt.

The MicroLoan Program is a pilot program and may not be available in your region of the country.

Contact

Check the telephone directory under "U.S. Government" for the nearest SBA office or call the SBA Small Business Answer Desk 1-(800) 8-ASK-SBA or (202) 205-7064. For the hearing impaired the TDD number is (202) 205-7333.

SBA OnLine- electronic bulletin board - modem and computer required

(800) 697-4636 (limited access)

(900) 463-4636 (full access)

(202) 401-9600 (D.C. metro only)

Internet: SBA Home Page: <http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/>

SBA gopher: <gopher://gopher.sbaonline.sba.gov/>

File transfer protocol: <ftp://ftp.sbaonline.sba.gov/>

Small Business Investment Companies (SBICs)

Equity Capital, Long-Term Loans and Expert Management Assistance

Congress created the Small Business Investment Company Program in 1958 to fill the gap between the availability of venture capital and the needs of small business in start-up and growth situations. SBICs, licensed and regulated by the Small Business Administration (SBA), are privately owned and managed investment firms. They use their own funds, plus funds obtained by borrowing at favorable rates with an SBA guaranty and/or by selling their preferred stock to the SBA, to make venture-capital investments in small businesses.

Virtually all SBICs are profit-motivated businesses. They provide equity capital, long-term loans, debt-equity investments and management assistance to qualifying small businesses. Their incentive is the chance to share in the success of the small business as it and prospers. Most SBICs are owned by small groups of local investors. Many, however, are owned by commercial banks. Some SBICs are corporations with publicly traded stock; others are subsidiaries of corporations.

The program makes funding available to all types of manufacturing, distribution and service industries. According to SBA data, the industry group "Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries" received less than 2 percent of SBIC funds from 1994-1996.

Many investment companies seek out small businesses with new products or services because of the strong growth potential of such firms. Some SBICs specialize in a particular field in which their management has special knowledge or competency. Most, however, consider a wide variety of investment opportunities.

Project Examples

Client confidentiality in SBIC affairs prohibits the description of specific examples.

and through SBA OnLine, the electronic bulletin board.

Eligibility

A business must meet the SBA's definition of "small" to be eligible for SBIC financing. In general, the SBA defines small businesses as companies whose net worth is \$18 million or less and whose average net (after-tax) income for the preceding two years does not exceed \$6 million. For some industries, the above standards are too low, and alternative size standards are used. In determining whether a business qualifies, the SBA considers its parent, subsidiaries and affiliates.

Uses and Restrictions

The SBA publishes a regularly updated directory all current SBIC licenses as well as the amount of each SBIC's private capital and the amount of government leverage it has received. Information on each SBIC's type of ownership and investment policies are also available from the SBA by mail or over the Internet

Contact

The nearest SBA office can be identified in the telephone directory under "U.S. Government" or call the SBA Answer Desk at (800) 8-ASK-SBA. To send a fax to the SBA, dial (202) 205-7064. For the hearing impaired, the TDD is (704) 344-6640.

SBA OnLine: electronic bulletin board - modem and computer required

(800) 697-4636 (limited access)
(900) 463-4636 (full access)
(202) 401-9600 (D.C. metro area)

Internet

<http://www.sba.gov>

III. Management Assistance

Also see:

**Rural Business Enterprise Grants
Intermediary Relending Loan Program
Rural Business Opportunity Grants**

Cooperative Services (CS)

Assistance for Forming and Operating Agricultural Cooperatives in the Form of Research, Technical Assistance, Information, Training, Educational Materials and Limited Funding for Cooperative Research Agreements

Cooperative Services (CS) helps rural residents form new cooperative businesses and improve the operations of existing cooperatives. To accomplish this, CS provides technical assistance, conducts training workshops, and produces and distributes information and educational materials. Currently, CS works almost exclusively with agricultural (including forest product) cooperatives. A legislative initiative is underway, however, to expand its authority to provide services to all rural cooperatives. Recent projects already include other types of rural cooperatives.

CS provides a wide range of assistance for people interested in forming new cooperatives. This help can range from an initial feasibility study to the creation and implementation of a business plan. CS staff includes cooperative development specialists who do everything from identifying potential cooperative functions through developing bylaws and business plans. They also provide training for cooperative directors on operations, management and fiduciary responsibilities, and member information, among other topics.

CS also provides technical assistance to existing cooperatives on a full range of issues facing cooperative business enterprises to help improve a cooperative's business structure and operating efficiency. Examples of technical assistance include help in: assessing the economic feasibility of new facilities or adding new products or services, developing a strategic marketing plan to cope with new competitive forces, making a crucial decision about whether to merge or form a joint venture with other cooperatives, or finding ways to turn the raw products of cooperative members into value-added products.

Finally, CS conducts research, both internally and through cooperative agreements, to provide a knowledge base necessary to support cooperatives dealing with changing markets and business trends. Studies include financial, structural, managerial, policy, member governance, legal, and social issues, as well as various other economic activities of cooperatives. Research is designed to have direct application to current and emerging requirements of cooperatives. A major challenge is to analyze industry structure and cooperative operational practices to determine the changes required to maintain or achieve a producer-oriented marketing system. Recent research studies have focused on equity redemption plans used by cooperatives, identification of new niche markets for cooperatives, and opportunities and obstacles cooperatives face when exporting goods overseas.

Project Examples

Cooperative Services has provided assistance to a variety of groups of rural producers wishing to add value to their products. Current and past projects include:

- Working with a group of grain producers to determine the feasibility of forming a cooperative to add value to their grain by drying, storing, and marketing on a cooperative basis;
- Helping goats milk producers determine the feasibility and ultimately start a cooperative to process the milk into cheese;
- Assisting the formation of a cooperative for rural women who produce hand-crafted gift

items;

- Assisting the formation of a vegetable growers cooperative which provides increased market access for its members; and
- Assisting the formation of a divers' cooperative which harvests and processes sea urchins for export to Asia;

Information Available

Cooperative Services is the nation's leading resource for information, research and technical assistance relating to rural cooperatives. This information in-

cludes resource guides to educational programs for cooperatives, directories of rural cooperatives, management and financial guidelines. For a free catalog listing more than 200 USDA publications and videos about cooperatives, call (202) 690-0357 or see the website. Cooperative Services also publishes a monthly magazine, *Rural Cooperatives*. Nominal fees are charged for some publications.

Legislative Authority

Cooperative Marketing Act of 1926

Application and Financial Information

With the exception of the Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program, (see p. 72), CS provides services to rural residents, not direct financial assistance.

Eligibility

Currently, CS works almost exclusively with agricultural (including forest product) cooperatives. A legislative initiative is underway, however, to expand its authority to provide services to all rural cooperatives.

Contact

CS staff members in the national office work in conjunction with cooperative development specialists located at many of USDA's state Rural Development offices; technical assistance is available through some of these offices (see Appendix). For educational programs and workshops, and further information about technical assistance available, please write to the national program office. For publications and videos about cooperatives, call (202) 690-0357 or see the website.

National Program Office

Randall E. Torgerson, Deputy Administrator
Cooperative Services
Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA
Stop 3250
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-3250
202-720-7558
Email: rtorg@rurdev.usda.gov

Internet

[www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rbcds/html/
biloan.htm](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rbcds/html/biloan.htm)

Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program (RCDG)

Grants for Establishing and Operating Centers for Cooperative Development

The Cooperative Development Grant Program was established under the 1996 Farm Bill to provide grants to nonprofit corporations and institutions of higher education for the primary purpose of improving the economic condition of rural areas through the development of new cooperatives and improving operations of existing cooperatives. Emphasis is placed on those projects with high potential to improve rural business activity through the cooperative farmer organizations.

The 1996 Farm Bill removed "Technology" from the previous Rural Technology and Cooperative Development Grant (RTCDG) program, thereby directing the focus of the program specifically to cooperative development.

Project Examples

The following are examples of cooperative development activities that could be funded under this program:

Cooperative Development Centers

- Providing services to newly developing cooperatives in its geographic area on (1) organizational guidance, (2) cooperative development strategies, (3) business plans, and (4) feasibility analyses.
- Arranging training through State Land Grant Universities on cooperative organization and management skills.
- Developing expertise in financial management, bookkeeping/accounting, and cooperative law to enable hands-on assistance to developing cooperatives.
- Evaluating the potential for development of a base of support for cooperative programs within local communities to assure needed leadership is mobilized.

Other Cooperative Development Assistance

This new program replaces the mandates of the Rural Technology and Cooperative Development Grants program. The following examples, funded under the old program, could also be considered under the new Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program:

- Intertribal Value-Added Agricultural Cooperative

Development: The Intertribal Agricultural Council, Inc. of Montana was awarded a grant to establish a cooperative Rural Development Center serving 42 Native American tribes in 20 states. The Center is assisting in the start-up, expansion, and operational funding for agricultural marketing and production cooperatives for the benefit of people located on rural Native American reservations in 20 states. A major function of the center is fostering working relationships and interdependence among the various reservation cooperatives in order to share experiences, build marketing and production networks, take advantage of value-added opportunities, and enhance inter-tribal cooperation.

• Rocky Mountain Center for Cooperative Development: The grant provided funding to support the operation and expansion of the Regional Cooperative Development Center to cover three states (Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming) to fulfill the growing demands of the Rocky Mountain West by providing technical assistance and support to rural communities engaged in cooperative development initiatives.

Information Available

Please see the entry for Cooperative Services.

Legislative Authority

Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (1996 Farm Bill)

Application and Financial Information

An invitation for pre-applications for RCDG grants will be published in the Federal Register during fiscal year 1998. Funding available will be approximately \$1.7 million.

Eligibility

Nonprofit corporations and institutions of higher education will be eligible to receive grants.

Uses and Restrictions

Grants may go to eligible recipients to form and operate centers for cooperative development--for providing education, research, and technical assistance to rural cooperatives and assisting the cooperative development process. Grants may be awarded for up to 75 percent of the total cost of the project. The applicant must contribute at least 25 percent from non-federal sources. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis and are awarded based on specific selection criteria. These criteria are published each year in Federal Register notices.

Contact

For information on the status of this program and other information, contact the national program office. The Internet site listed below is for USDA's Cooperative Services.

National Program Office

James E. Haskell
Assistant Deputy Administrator
Cooperative Services,
Rural Business-Cooperative Services
Stop 3250, Room 4016 South Building
1400 Independence Ave S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-3250
(202) 720-8460
Email:James.Haskell@usda.gov

Internet

www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rbcds/html/rbcdhome.htm

The Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)

Management Assistance for Small Businesses

SCORE is a nonprofit organization sponsored by the Small Business Administration (SBA) dedicated to helping small businesses prosper since 1964. More than 390 locally organized, self-administered chapters offer services throughout the United States, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Volunteers are trained as counselors, advisers and mentors to work in management and training for existing small businesses and for those considering going into business.

SCORE attempts to match clients' needs with a counselor whose experience is in a comparable line of business. Note that counselors who have business experience in agriculture or forestry may not be available at your SCORE chapter. Check with your local SCORE office to determine if counselors with relevant expertise are available. SCORE can offer pre-business counseling, existing business counseling and mentoring sessions for no charge. SCORE also provides low-cost local workshops on business planning, management, financing and marketing.

Project Examples

A policy of client confidentiality prevents SCORE staff from providing examples for this guide.

Application and Financial Information

Potential clients should contact their local SBA or SCORE office to request a meeting with a counselor. The SCORE chapter volunteers will check their rosters to attempt to pair clients with counselors who have relevant business experience.

Eligibility

Almost any small independent business not dominant in its field can receive help from SCORE. Clients need not have an SBA loan to receive support. SCORE services also are available to nonprofit associations.

Uses and Restrictions

SCORE volunteers provide consultation and counseling to existing businesses and before a business is actually formed to help with start-up issues and decisions.

Contact

To locate the SCORE office nearest you, check your local telephone directory or call 1-800-8ASK-SBA or

send a fax to (202) 205-7064. For the hearing impaired, the TDD number is (202) 205-7333.

National Program Office
The SCORE Association
409 Third Street, S.W., 4th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20024

Internet

To seek counseling and advice, you may download a SCORE Request For Counseling Form (SBA Form 641). Business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs can request SCORE counseling or mentoring on line, courtesy of the SBA.

Start at the SBA web page at <http://www.sba.gov>. Click on "Starting Your Business," and then on "Service Corps of Retired Executives." If you complete the form online, the local SCORE chapter should contact you.

Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Program

Short-Term Training and Counseling for Small Businesses in Central and Easily Accessible Branch Locations

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) administers the Small Business Development Center Program (SBDC) to provide management assistance to current and prospective small business owners. The program is a cooperative effort of the private sector, the educational community and federal, state and local governments. It enhances economic development by providing small businesses with management and technical assistance.

The SBDC Program is designed to deliver up-to-date counseling, training and technical assistance in all aspects of small business management. SBDC services include, but are not limited to, assisting small businesses with financial, marketing, production, organization, engineering and technical problems and feasibility studies. Special SBDC programs and economic development activities include international trade assistance, technical assistance, procurement assistance, venture capital formation and rural development.

There are 56 small business development centers — one in every state (Texas has four), the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands — with a network of nearly 1,000 service locations. In each state a lead organization sponsors the SBDC and manages the program. The lead organization coordinates the programs and services which are offered to small businesses through a network of subcenters and satellite locations in each state. Subcenters are located at numerous colleges, universities, community colleges, vocational schools, chambers of commerce and economic development corporations.

The SBDCs make special efforts to reach members of socially and economically disadvantaged groups, veterans, women and the disabled. SBDCs also provide assistance to small businesses applying for Small Business Innovation and Research (SBIR) grants from federal agencies.

SBDC assistance is tailored to the local community and the needs of individual clients. Each center develops services in cooperation with local SBA district offices to ensure statewide coordination with other available resources.

Each center has a director, staff members, volunteers and part-time personnel. Qualified individuals recruited from professional and trade associations, the legal and banking community, academia, chambers of commerce and SCORE (the Service Corps of Retired Executives) are among those who donate their services. SBDCs also use paid consultants, consulting engineers and testing laboratories from the private sector to help clients who need specialized expertise.

The SBA provides 50 percent or less of the operating funds for each state SBDC; one or more sponsors provide the rest. These matching fund contributions are provided by state legislatures, private sector foundations and grants, state and local chambers of commerce, state-chartered economic development corporations, public and private universities, vocational and technical schools, community colleges, etc. Increasingly, sponsors' contributions exceed the minimum 50 percent matching share.

Project Examples

Client confidentiality prohibits SBDC staff from providing examples.

Eligibility

Assistance from an SBDC is available to anyone interested in beginning a small business for the first time or improving or expanding an existing small business, who cannot afford the services of a private consultant.

Uses and Restrictions

Specific uses and offerings vary among SBDCs. Some may have programs or offerings specifically directed at agricultural businesses while others may not. Contact your local SBDC for additional information.

Contact

For additional information or to take advantage of SBDC offerings, contact the SBDC located nearest to you:

University of Alabama, Birmingham, AL
(205) 934-7260

University of Alaska/Anchorage, Anchorage, AK
(907) 274-7232

Maricopa County Community College, Tempe, AZ
(602) 731-8202

University of Arkansas, Little Rock, AR
(501) 324-9043

California Trade and Commerce Agency,
Sacramento, CA
(916) 324-5068

Office of Business Development, Denver, CO
(303) 892-3809

University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT
(203) 486-4135

University of Delaware, Newark, DE
(302) 831-2747

Howard University, Washington, DC
(202) 806-1550

University of West Florida, Pensacola, FL
(904) 444-2060

University of Georgia, Athens, GA
(706) 542-6762

University of Hawaii at Hilo, Hilo, HI
(808) 933-3515

Boise State University, Boise, ID
(208) 385-1640

Dept. of Commerce & Community Affairs,
Springfield, IL
(207) 524-5856

University of Maryland, College Park, MD
(301) 405-2147

University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA
(413) 545-6301

Wayne State University, Detroit, MI
(313) 577-4848

Dept. of Trade and Econ. Developmt St. Paul, MN
(612) 297-5770

University of Mississippi, University, MS
(601) 232-5001

University of Missouri, Columbia, MO
(314) 882-0344

Department of Commerce, Helena, MT
(406) 444-4780

University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, NE

(402) 554-2521

University of Nevada in Reno, Reno, NV

(702) 784-1717

University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH
(603) 862-2200

Rutgers University, Newark, NJ
(201) 648-5950

Santa Fe Community College, Santa Fe, NM
(505) 438-1362

State University of New York, Albany, NY
(518) 443-5398

University of North Carolina, Raleigh, NC
(919) 571-4154

University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND
(701) 77-3700

Dept. of Development, Columbus, OH
(614) 466-2711

S.E. Oklahoma State University, Durant, OK
(405) 924-0277

Lane Community College, Eugene, OR
(503) 726-2250

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA
(215) 898-1219

Inter American University, Hato Rey, PR
(787) 763-5108

Small Farmer Outreach Training and Technical Assistance Program

Grants to Educational Institutions and Nonprofit Organizations that Provide Outreach, Training, and Management Assistance to Farmers who are Experiencing Financial Difficulty

This grant program is designed to reverse the decline of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. The intended outcome is to encourage and assist socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to own and operate farms, participate in agricultural programs, and become an integral part of the agricultural community.

Project Examples

The following are examples of funded projects:

- The Women in Agriculture Business Management Program, based at Texas A & M University, trains women who own or work on a family farm to become more involved with management of the business. The program offers workshops at various locations in the state on planning and goal-setting, income tax and estate planning, value-added business opportunities, marketing, and general financial management.
- The Oglala Lakota College's Adult Farmer Ranch Program in southwestern South Dakota is aimed at training Lakota Sioux college students and community members in organic agriculture. Students cultivate their own 40 x 40-foot plot at the college for a season, with the goal of eventually returning to their own reservation lands to practice the same sustainable methods of production. Students can receive college credit for participating, and obtain certification in organic gardening for completing a one-year educational /training program, or an Associate Degree of Applied Science in Organic Agriculture for completing a two-year degree.
- The Women's Agriculture Network, a collaborative project of the University of Vermont Extension, the Center for Sustainable Agriculture, and the Small Business Program of Trinity College of Vermont provides educational programs and technical assistance to women who are starting or expanding a farm business. Course offerings are rotated to sites around the state and include topics such as: writing a business plan, technical assistance in various areas of production, farm business diversification, and self-assessment for individuals considering entering farming.

Legislative Authority

Section 2501 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990.

Application and Financial Information

Any requests for proposals appear in the Federal Register. Eligible educational institutions should submit FSA Cooperative Agreement and Grant Application Package (provided by the Farm Service Agency) and a written proposal to the address given in the Federal Register.

Notice of action taken on proposals will generally be given within 90 days of the proposal submission deadline.

Grants are made for a five-year period with a 12-month option in most instances. Applicants that have previously received a grant and have achieved the goals established for the previous grant, must reapply for an additional grant under the initial grant procedures. In 1997 there were 28 grantees. The average grant amount was \$250,000.

All accepted proposals will be reviewed by a peer review panel. In evaluating the proposal, the following will be taken into account: (1) Degree to which the proposal clearly describes its objective and shows a high level of feasibility and consistency with USDA policy and FSA mission; (2) degree to which the institution or organization is committed to the project, as shown by funds, in-kind services, or historical success in meeting the objectives of the program; (3) degree to which the proposal reflects collaborative approaches in meeting with other agencies or organizations to enhance the objectives of the program; (4) degree to which the proposal contains efforts to reach persons identified as

socially disadvantaged and farmers in designated socially disadvantaged counties (be sure to indicate the areas serviced and number of farmers who would benefit from the services offered); and (5) degree to which the proposal reflects special innovative features to attract, interest, and improve the economical and social conditions of the limited-resource farmer.

Eligibility

Eligible institutions include land-grant colleges, including Tuskegee University, Indian Tribal Community Colleges and Alaska Native cooperative colleges, Hispanic-serving post-secondary educational institutions or other post-secondary educational institutions and community-based organizations that: (1) have demonstrated experience in providing agricultural education or other agriculturally related services to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers; (2) provide documentary evidence of past experience in working with socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers during the two years preceding the application for assistance; and (3) do not engage in activities prohibited under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Applicants must have the financial, legal, administrative, and operational capacity to carry out the objectives of the program. Applicants should provide a certification of all members of the applicant/applicant entity including name, gender, race and national origin.

Uses and Restrictions

Grants to institutions are meant to enhance their capacity to assist small and minority producers to operate a farming or ranching enterprise independently, to produce income adequate to service debts, maintain farm operations, and provide a reasonable standard of living.

Grant recipients provide intensive training and management assistance to small farmers or ranchers, particularly minority farmers or ranchers. The program is designed to assist all small farmers in financial need, regardless of their ethnicity.

The NRCS State Conservationist, or a designated state project coordinator, will work with granting institutions to select the farmers and ranchers who will be recipients of the program. This person will also make periodic visits to the grant recipient, conduct project reviews, and review progress reports for the program.

Contact

For further information on this program you should contact the FSA office in your state or the headquarters office (below):

National Program Office

John Just-Buddy, Program Manager
202-690-1890

Charles Whitaker

202-720-6078; 202-720-4995 (fax)

Special Programs, Stop 0521
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

IV. Marketing Assistance

Cooperative Value-Added Program

Technical and Financial Assistance for Developing Market Feasibility and Market Identification Opportunities for Value-Added Products to Benefit Cooperative Marketing Organizations

The 1996 Farm Bill established an account in the U.S. Treasury known as the Fund for Rural America to provide funds for rural development programs and a competitive grant program to support research, education and extension activities. From this fund, the Secretary of Agriculture allocated \$1.7 million to the Rural Business-Cooperative Service's (RBS) Cooperative Services Program for the funding of programs that will encourage value-added activities to enhance the economic sustainability of rural communities. The resulting Cooperative Value-Added program is intended to directly benefit proposed or existing cooperative marketing organizations by focusing on, but not limited to, technical assistance in development of market feasibility analysis and/or market identification opportunities for value-added products.

Project Examples

- Provide services to existing or newly developing cooperatives by conducting feasibility analyses on the development, processing, and marketing of value-added projects.
- Provide assistance in identifying marketing opportunities for value-added products for existing or newly developing cooperatives.

the cost of carrying out relevant projects. Use of funds should directly benefit proposed or existing cooperative marketing organizations by focusing on, but not limited to, technical assistance in development of market feasibility analysis and/or market identification opportunities for value-added products. The applicant must contribute at least 25 percent from non-federal sources. Awards will be made competitively based on specific selection criteria. These criteria will be published in a Federal Register notice requesting proposals.

Information Available

Please see the entry for Cooperative Services.

Legislative Authority

Section 793 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (1996 Farm Bill)

Application and Financial Information

A notice published in the Federal Register will call for proposals.

Eligibility

Federal agencies, state and local governments, institutions of higher education, and nonprofit organizations will be eligible.

Uses and Restrictions

Awards, in the form of cooperative agreements, will go to eligible recipients to fund up to 75 percent of

Contact

National Program Office

John H. Wells, Director
Cooperative Development Division
Cooperative Services, Rural Business-Cooperative Services
Stop 3254, Room 4218 South Building
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-3254
202-720-3350
Email: John.Wells@usda.gov

Internet

www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rbcds/html/rbcdhome.htm

Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP)

Matching Grants for Marketing Agricultural Products through State Departments of Agriculture

The Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP) provides matching funds, on a competitive basis, through state departments of agriculture or similar state agencies to conduct studies or develop innovative approaches related to the marketing of agricultural products. While this program has been traditionally used for farm products, forest-based products are also eligible. Many states are currently undertaking FSMIP projects; find out if your state department of agriculture is working on marketing issues, or might be interested in developing projects, that relate to your area of interest. While only state agencies are eligible to apply, states are encouraged to cooperate with other federal, state, and local agencies, producers, industry organizations, and others in developing and conducting projects.

FSMIP funds can be requested for a wide range of research and service work aimed at facilitating the marketing, distribution, and utilization of agricultural products through commercial channels. The program's purpose is to aid the distribution of agricultural products through research, market aids and services, and regulatory activities, in order to improve marketing methods and facilities, reduce distribution costs, improve dietary and nutritional standards, and develop new and wider markets for American agricultural products both in the U.S. and in other countries.

While all proposals meeting the matching funds requirement and fall within FSMIP guidelines will be considered, states are encouraged to submit proposals aimed at:

- identifying and evaluating new uses, markets, and marketing systems for agricultural products, both domestically and internationally;
- developing or assessing alternative marketing approaches to cope with increased price volatility and related risks in a market-driven, global economy; and
- re-engineering and experimenting with a variety of public marketing service programs—including market news and information, grades and standards, and inspection or certification programs—to facilitate efficient and fair trading within complex and concentrated marketing systems.

FSMIP's national program staff also is available to aid states in planning and carrying out individual state and multi-state or regional marketing service projects; help arrange for specialized technical assistance from AMS and other agencies of the USDA in program development and execution; and help plan and conduct marketing service workshops at which state project leaders and representatives of USDA and industry evaluate current programs and improvements needed in programs to solve major marketing problems.

Project Examples

- California — \$62,000 to document and evaluate, through a selected case study, the approach, viability, effectiveness, and adaptability of electronic technology in agricultural marketing.
- Connecticut — \$30,000 to determine, through a feasibility study, the economics of establishing a specialized shared food processing facility in Connecticut, New Hampshire, or Rhode Island.
- Delaware — \$29,640 to conduct surveys of potential users of kenaf and develop a marketing plan for the kenaf industry.
- Iowa — \$8,936 to identify producers and handlers of organic products; increase market potential; identify the potential for specialty crops; and identify needs of the organic industry.

- Kentucky — \$60,000 to assess the existing diversification and marketing activities underway in 15 "tobacco-dependent" counties; develop a coordinated, multi county approach to improving these programs; and document diversification successes for use in future educational and training activities.
- Minnesota — \$45,000 to identify marketing opportunities and strategies for small-scale producers and processors by increasing the scale of direct marketing of meat, fish, and fowl and by developing niche retail and food service markets for value-added products.

For project descriptions from other states, please see our website or call the national office.

Legislative Authority

Section 204(b) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946

Application and Financial Information

While only state agencies are eligible to apply, states are encouraged to involve other organizations in the development and conduct of proposals and projects. States must match, at least on a one-to one basis, the Federal funds provided in this grant. If properly valued and directed, resources (cash or in-kind) contributed by partner organizations can be applied to the "matching" requirement for federal funds. Federal funds in the amount of \$1.2 million are available for grants in fiscal year 1997. This is the same level as provided for each of the previous two years. The program is very competitive; in 1996, almost five times the number of applications were received than could be funded.

Eligibility

Only state departments of agriculture or similar state agencies are eligible to apply for direct funding. However, others, including producers and industry organizations, interested in initiating and developing proposals and projects are encouraged to work with state departments of agriculture.

Uses and Restrictions

Funding is not authorized for advertising or promotion. FSMIP also is not designed to support long-term, basic research or, with limited exceptions, to purchase equipment and facilities.

Contact

Organizations interested in the development of a proposal should contact their state department of agriculture or the national program office for additional information and guidance.

National Program Office

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Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program
Transportation and Marketing Division
Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA
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Internet

www.usda.gov/ams/tmdfsmip.htm

Foreign Market Development Program (FMD)

Export Trade Promotion Assistance Through Cooperative Agreements with Nonprofit Commodity or Trade Associations

The Foreign Market Development Program (FMD), also known as “the cooperator program,” develops, maintains and expands long-term export markets for U.S. agricultural products through cooperative agreements with nonprofit commodity and trade associations. Created 40 years ago, the program fosters a trade promotion partnership between USDA and U.S. agricultural producers and processors who are represented by nonprofit commodity or trade associations called cooperators. Under this partnership, USDA and the cooperators pool their technical and financial resources to conduct market development activities outside the U.S.

Participants in the program include approximately 30 groups representing specific U.S. commodity sectors, such as horticultural products, feed grains, wheat, soybeans, rice, tallow, dairy cattle, red meats, poultry, seafood, and forest products. These nonprofit groups are funded by their members, including individual farmers and ranchers, specialized producers or breeders, farmer cooperatives, and processors and handlers. Other cooperators in the FMD program include the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and four State and Regional Trade Groups representing the agricultural interests of the eastern, western, southern, and mid-American states. The cooperator program benefits U.S. farmers, processors, and exporters by assisting their organizations in developing new foreign markets and competing for market share in existing markets. While individuals and private enterprises are not eligible for cooperative agreements, they are encouraged to find out about and engage in the activities of those organizations which represent their interests. The program allows all segments of U.S. agriculture, including those associated with small volume export products, to participate in efforts to build export markets. The overseas promotions focus mainly on generic U.S. commodities, rather than individual brand-name products, and are targeted toward long-term market development. For branded products, see the Market Access Program (MAP) entry.

Cooperative agreements between FAS and the cooperators authorize them to conduct overseas promotions. Partial funding may be provided by FAS for the following activities:

- Market research.
- Trade servicing activities are aimed at developing or improving relationships with the trade, including foreign importers, distributors, and government officials. This may include advertising in foreign trade publications, hosting trade conferences, or sponsoring trade delegations to the United States to promote the quality of U.S. products or U.S. production capabilities.
- Technical assistance activities are usually intended to expand the foreign country's capability to use or process U.S. commodities.
- Consumer promotions for the retail market include advertising, consumer education, and in-store promotions.

Project Examples

FAS works through private industry “cooperators” to identify overseas markets for new products, promote U.S. exports of such products, and research and develop new products. FMD and the Market Access Program (MAP) (see entry) have provided funding for

developing markets for the following “new use” industrial products in the following countries:

- Ethanol (waste products from feed grains) in South Korea and Taiwan

- Biodegradable Plastics (corn starch) in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, and Hungary
- Paper Products (kenaf) in Japan.

Legislative Authority

Title VII of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978.

Application and Financial Information

FAS is moving toward a competitive process for allocating cooperator funds.

To be approved, an applicant's proposal must indicate how it can effectively contribute to the creation, expansion, or maintenance of markets abroad. Primary emphasis is on commercial markets, and preference is given to those proposals promising early results and lasting benefits. Approvals and priorities are based on the following evaluation criteria: 1) the applicant's willingness to contribute resources, 2) past export performance, 3) past demand expansion performance, 4) future demand expansion goals, and 5) accuracy of past demand expansion projections. FAS will be soliciting comments from interested parties regarding further methods of evaluation.

Program funding in fiscal year 1997 available for cooperative agreements is \$27.5 million.

Applicants should submit a written proposal to the Deputy Administrator, Commodity and Marketing Programs, FAS. Approval time ranges from 80 to 180 days.

Eligibility

Preference is given to nonprofit U.S. agricultural and trade groups that represent an entire industry or are nationwide in membership and scope.

Uses and Restrictions

Cooperator funds are authorized through program agreements with nonprofit commodity or trade associations, called Cooperators, that provide for partial reimbursement of promotional activities in annual marketing plans approved by the FAS. In general, Cooperator funds may be used only in direct support of activities conducted outside the U.S. Types of activities that may be funded include trade servicing, market research, and technical assistance to actual or potential foreign purchasers.

Contact

For more information about the cooperator program, contact the national program office. Please see the website for more information.

Contact information for the four state and regional trade groups:

Eastern U.S. Agricultural & Food Export Council
1007 Mumma Road
Wormleysburg, Pennsylvania 17043
Ronald Gaskill, Executive Director
(717) 731-6017

Mid-America International Agri-Trade Council
400 West Erie Street, Suite 100
Chicago, Illinois 60610
Tim Hamilton, Executive Director
(312) 944-3030

Southern U.S. Trade Association
World Trade Center, Suite 1340
2 Canal Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130-1208
Scott Hansen, Executive Director
(504) 568-5956

Western U.S. Agricultural Trade Association
13101 NE Highway #99, Suite 200
Vancouver, Washington 98665-2736
Dr. James Youde, Executive Director
(360) 574-2627

National Program Office
USDA/Foreign Agriculture Service
Marketing Operations Staff
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Washington, D.C. 20250-1042
202-720-5521

Internet

[ffas.usda.gov/faspublishations/fas-factsheets/
coopertr.html](http://ffas.usda.gov/faspublishations/fas-factsheets/coopertr.html)

Market Access Program (MAP)

Matching Funds for Export Market Development Activities such as Consumer Promotions, Market Research, Technical Assistance and Trade Servicing

The Market Access Program (MAP) encourages the development, maintenance and expansion of commercial export markets for agricultural products by helping U.S. producers, exporters, private companies and other trade organizations finance promotional activities. Funds are provided on a reimbursable basis with a cost-share requirement for consumer promotions, market research, technical assistance, and trade servicing. MAP divides its funding between (1) branded product promotion--where small businesses and cooperatives are given priority; and (2) generic product promotion--where funds go to the four state and regional trade groups, state departments of agriculture and the national trade associations/commodities groups. For the branded program, private companies can apply directly to MAP. Many producers and companies apply through one of the state and regional trade groups—representing the agricultural interests of the eastern, western, southern, and mid-American states—or the national trade associations/commodities groups, if they have branded programs. Since some of the national trade associations/commodities groups do not have branded programs, such as American Forest and Paper Products, companies apply directly to MAP. FAS and the four State and Regional Trade Groups have outreach programs for small companies and producers interested in developing export markets, accessing market research, and developing new products.

Since its inception in 1985, the MAP and its predecessors, the Targeted Export Assistance Program and the Market Promotion Program, have provided cost-share funds to nearly 800 U.S. companies, cooperatives, and trade associations to promote their products overseas. In that period, total U.S. agricultural exports have more than doubled, from \$26.3 billion -- the first year of the program--to a projected \$60 billion in 1996, a new record. During those same years, exports of U.S. high-value products have more than tripled, and now account for 34 percent of all U.S. agricultural exports, up from 12 percent in 1980. In the meantime, the U.S. share of world trade in these products has risen from 10 percent to 17 percent. The Export Incentive Program (EIP), which is part of the MAP, helps U.S. commercial entities conduct brand promotion activities including advertising, trade shows, in-store demonstrations, and trade seminars.

MAP is one of two programs used by FAS for export market promotions; also see the Foreign Market Development Program (FMD) entry.

Project Examples

USDA has approved MAP proposals to promote a wide variety of U.S. food and fiber products, including: apples, asparagus, canned peaches and fruit cocktail, catfish, cherries, citrus, cotton, dairy products, dry beans, eggs, feed grains, frozen potatoes, ginseng, grapes, honey, hops, kiwifruit, meat, peanuts, pears, pet food, pistachios, poultry meat, prunes, raisins, rice, salmon, soybeans, strawberries, sunflower seeds, surimi, tallow, tomato products, walnuts, and wheat.

Specific examples of funded projects include:

Generic programs

- Promotion of U.S. forest products in Europe through conferences and demonstration projects.
- Promotion of sunflower kernel in Germany through trade shows, advertising, and public

relations.

Brand identified promotion program

- Promotion of branded citrus in the Far East and Europe
- Promotion of branded almonds by increasing consumer awareness in Japan, France, and the U.K.
- Promotions by state groups of a variety of high value products worldwide.

Legislative Authority

Section 203 of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978, as amended.

Application and Financial Information

Under the MAP, funds from USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) are used to partially reimburse program participants conducting foreign market development projects for eligible products in specified countries. Each year USDA announces an application period for participation in the MAP and publishes it in the Federal Register. Applications for funding for fiscal year 1997 were due in January. Proposals for the MAP are developed by trade organizations and private firms and submitted to USDA. Under branded product promotion activities, individual companies must provide at least a 50% funding match; under generic promotion activities, trade associations and others must meet a minimum 10-percent match requirement. Applications are evaluated based on the following criteria: (1) contribution level, (2) export performance, (3) projected export goals, and (4) accuracy of past export projections, if relevant.

After approval by USDA, participating organizations or firms sign a program agreement with the CCC. Authority to expend promotional resources is a two-stage process. First, FAS must approve each recipient's application for funds and set a yearly allocation level, overall program ceiling, budget ceilings by country for branded and generic activities, amount of branded funds targeted for small-sized entities, and conditions relating to the conduct of the year's program. In the second stage, the recipient must submit a detailed plan fully describing proposed activities, cost categories, and resources to be contributed by the recipient.

MAP program requirements for participation include cost-sharing, strategic planning, export goals, and activity evaluations. Information required from participants includes the estimated increase in exports and market share that would result from the proposed promotion, the participant's program management capabilities, and the organization's contribution toward cost-sharing.

In fiscal year 1997, \$90 million is available for recipients through MAP.

Eligibility

Proposals for the MAP are developed by trade organizations and private firms and submitted to USDA. Small businesses and cooperatives are given priority.

Uses and Restrictions

Participants are required to certify that federal funds used under the program are used to supplement, and not supplant, private sector funds. Promotion of brand products in a single country is generally limited to no more than five years.

Contact

To submit a MAP proposal or to find out how to do so, contact the national program office. Please see our website for more information.

For contact information for the four state and regional trade groups, see the Foreign Market Development Program (FMD) entry.

National Program Office

USDA/Foreign Agriculture Service
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202-720-5521

Internet

[ffas.usda.gov/faspublishations/fas-factsheets/
mapfact.html](http://ffas.usda.gov/faspublishations/fas-factsheets/mapfact.html)

National Organic Program

Will Provide National Organic Certification Standards, Accreditation for Certifying Agencies and Information

The National Organic Program (NOP) is in the process of developing uniform federal standards related to the production, processing and marketing of organically produced foods. Once the national organic standards are finalized, state and private organizations will be accredited as organic certifiers through NOP. Farmers, processors and handling operators seeking organic certification can then be certified and inspected annually by these accredited organizations at the state and local level.

Established in the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990, NOP was created to develop credible national organic standards, ensure consumer confidence and facilitate trade. The NOP is charged with developing this in conjunction with the NOSB, an advisory committee of farmers, consumer advocates, scientists and others. Currently, a variety of both state and private certifiers carry out such activities and organic product certification, although accreditation of organic certifiers is not required in all states. There are no uniform federal organic labeling regulations. NOP is also working with other nations to develop international guidelines for organic foods.

Information Available

Once the national organic standards are finalized, the NOP national program office will maintain a list of accredited certifiers and can refer an interested operation to a certifier near the farm. NOP will also maintain a list of materials approved for use in organic agriculture and provide information to all interested parties. Once these standards are finalized, NOP will also work with the Cooperative Extension System and through nonprofit organizations to disseminate information about certification through county extension agents. NOP will work with NOSB to maintain a list of materials.

Legislative Authority

Title XXI--Organic Certification--of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (1990 Farm Bill).

Contact

Please contact the national program office to determine the status of the national organic standards.

National Program Office

Keith Jones

Program Manager, National Organic Program
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Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA
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202-690-1300

Research and Promotion Program R&P)

Provides Guidance and Oversight to Commodity Groups to Develop an Industry Self-Help Program to Strengthen that Commodity's Position in the Marketplace

The research and promotion programs are designed to strengthen the position of products in the marketplace by developing new markets, improving the quality of products, and finding better and cheaper ways of producing the products. They enable producers and processors, large and small, to combine their economic resources to conduct projects that would not economically feasible on an individual basis. These programs are industry-funded, but AMS has oversight responsibility for the administration and disbursement of funds. There currently are programs in effect for beef, cotton, dairy products, fluid milk, fresh cut flowers and greens, eggs, honey, pecans, pork, soybeans, watermelon, mushrooms and potatoes.

Research and promotion programs are authorized by specific legislation which establishes the parameters of the promotional effort. These research and promotion programs are administered by industry processors, manufacturers or consumers established as an agency, board, council or body to carry out the requirements of each act. Representatives to these groups are appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture. Annual budgets and plans for these programs are approved by the Secretary and the appropriate AMS division.

Project Examples

The Cotton Research and Promotion Act enabled producers to conduct the research that gives us the cotton blend fabrics we have today and to develop a national promotion program. Since the act was passed, cotton's share of the fabric industry (except for carpets) has grown from around 30 percent to nearly 80. The Soybean Research and Promotion Act of 1990 has provided funds for new product research that has resulted in soybeans being used as substitutes for other items ranging from food to ink.

Information Available

See the AMS Home Page for detailed information about each of the AMS Research and Promotion Programs.

Legislative Authority

The following acts provide legislative authority for research and promotion programs:

- Beef Research and Information Act
- Cotton Research and Promotion Act
- Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act of 1983
- Egg Research and Consumer Information Act
- Fluid Milk Promotion Act of 1990
- Fresh Cut Flowers and Greens Promotion and Information Act of 1993

- Honey Research, Promotion and Consumer Information Act
- Lime Research, Promotion, and Consumer Information Act of 1990
- Mushroom Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act of 1990
- Pecan Promotion and Research Act of 1990
- Pork Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act of 1985
- Potato Research and Promotion Act
- Soybean Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act of 1990
- Watermelon Research and Promotion Act
- National Kiwi Research, Promotion, and Consumer Information Act
- Popcorn Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act.
- Canola and Rapeseed Research, Promotion, and Consumer Information Act
- Commodity Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1996

Application and Financial Information

All research and promotion programs are funded from

assessments the commodity industry agrees to place upon itself. The amount of the assessment is voted upon by all who would be required to pay this assessment. Annual budgets and plans for these programs are approved by the Secretary of Agriculture and the appropriate AMS Division. Industry assessments also cover USDA's expenses for providing oversight to the operation of these programs.

Contact

Dairy Products

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Washington, DC 20090 6456
202-720-6902

Fruits & Vegetables

Martha Ransom, R&P
Fruit and Vegetable Division, AMS, USDA
Rm. 2535-S., P.O. Box 96456
Washington, DC 20090 6456
202-720-9915

Livestock & Grain

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202-720-1115

Eggs

Doug Bailey
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Washington, DC 20290 6456
202-720-3506

Cotton

Craig Shackleford, R&P
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202-720-2259

National Program Office

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Internet

<http://www.usda.gov/ams/titlepag.htm>

Wholesale and Alternative Markets Program (W&AM)

Feasibility Studies for Wholesale and Farmers' Markets in the Form of Cooperative Agreements, Technical Assistance, Information and Data

The purpose of the Wholesale and Alternative Markets Program (W&AM) is to help small- and medium-sized farmers improve and achieve more direct access to consumer markets. The program uses cooperative agreements and provides technical assistance, information and data to assist in developing feasibility studies for wholesale, collection, farmers' or public markets. While anyone can seek information from W&AM staff, farmers and others interested in cooperative agreements and grants must be associated with cooperatives or nonprofits and should receive endorsement from their state department of agriculture. While this program is focused on farm products, proposals related to forest-based product markets would also be considered.

W&AM uses agricultural marketing specialists, engineers, economists and university, state and other government agency professionals to form teams that perform marketing and facilities studies. Project teams also include customers and stakeholders such as small- to medium-sized growers, consumers, state departments of agriculture, market vendors and operators, city/county governments, agricultural cooperatives.

Specifically, the W&AM Program:

- Identifies and defines projects related to research and development of wholesale, collection, farmers and public markets.
- Conducts research related to collection, analysis, evaluation of data, and developing essential information needed for completion of project studies.
- Evaluates markets and facilities for specific crops and product volumes in order to improve the marketing strategies of small to medium-sized farmers and enhance their access to markets.
- Identifies design alternatives for construction and/or renovation of wholesale, collection, farmers and public markets.
- Prepares reports, reference materials, and architectural/graphic materials as appropriate to document study data and provide informational resources to customers.
- Provides technical assistance and follow-up services on existing and previous market projects related to market management, engineering/design modifications, alternative designs, marketing processes, expansion, and/or addition of new buildings.
- Exchanges information and makes public presentations before cooperators (state, municipal and private) and professional/industry organizations to convey study findings.

All W&AM projects use an internal ten-phase work plan process to clearly define the project goals and objectives, determine how best to obtain them, and then implement the plan. These ten steps are project proposal definition, initial project planning, research and data collection/analysis/evaluation, development of conceptual design, economic and financial analysis evaluation, preliminary design for proposed sites, report/presentation, refinement, final report, and follow-up.

Project Examples

- Due to Maine's geography and to the distance between markets, its producers have long found shipping natural resource products to markets to be expensive and difficult. In 1991, W&AM

worked with University of Maine researchers to help determine the potential for a Maine agribusiness park. A general need for expanding marketing infrastructure was indicated by

interviews with individuals from the potato, blueberry, Christmas tree growers and many other ornamentals, vegetable packers and distributors, and specialty food processors. Results showed that a facility could be shared by many different producer groups when their seasons do not overlap, and for different functions, such as wholesale and auctions for fruit and vegetable as well as Christmas trees, tips, and wreaths. Additional feasibility studies are expected, and hopes are high that at least one such multi-industry center will be built.

- W&AM assisted a farmers' market in Columbus, Ohio, in a feasibility study for its expansion. Through a cooperative agreement, W&AM and the Urban Market Collaborative, Inc. helped identify pre-existing conditions for expansion, selected an expansion design from four options, made marketing recommendations and identified new public purpose goals. The resulting feasibility study identified the ideal site, number of parking spaces, ideal number and variety of vendors, layout and design of the new market.

Information Available

Contact the national program office to receive copies of the following publications.

- *1996 National Farmers' Market Directory* - Compilation of names, locations and contacts of over 2410 organized farmers' markets throughout the United States that are listed and considered active by respective State departments of agriculture.
- *1996 Farmers' Markets Survey Report* - Summary and analysis of survey results received from participating organized farmers' markets throughout the United States that identifies the role and importance of direct sales in enabling the small to medium-sized growers to gain access to consumers.
- *Green Book - Produce Market Information Directory* - Marketing information and engineering data resource of over 90 produce markets, published through cooperation with and representing membership in the National Association of Produce Market Managers (NAPMM).
- *Thomasville, Ga., Regional Market Facility Feasibility Study* - A June 1996 report of a study conducted for the Georgia Department of Agriculture to evaluate the feasibility of upgrading the present market or building a new facility.

- *A Model for Determining the Maneuvering Space Requirements for Tractor-Trailers at Loading Docks* - A technical publication presenting methods of graphical analysis of truck maneuvering space requirements for site planning and development projects.

Legislative Authority

Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946

Application and Funding Information

W&AM provides funds through a cooperative agreement in which all money passes from USDA to a state's department of agriculture, and then to the cooperator. There is not a set maximum for grants, although larger grants may be spread over several years. The average grant amount is \$25,000.

Eligibility

Technical assistance and information and data can be provided to anyone upon request. Cooperative agreements for a marketing feasibility study linked to a facility can only be made with government agencies, educational institutions, cooperatives, or nonprofits. Therefore, small- or medium-sized producers would only be eligible for cooperative agreements and grants through cooperatives or nonprofits. Proposals in which findings will be useful to others and which are targeted to economically disadvantaged or minority farmers are given preference.

Uses and Restrictions

W&AM can provide financial and technical support only for a marketing feasibility study for a new market or an existing market to be expanded. Funds cannot be used to build a market. See the Community Facilities Program and the Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program for funding available for construction and renovation of farmers' markets and agricultural fairgrounds. W&AM projects must have an agriculture imperative. This can include forest-based products.

Contact

Contact your state department of agriculture or the national program office for applications and further information.

National Program Office

Arthur Burns, Program Manager
Wholesale and Alternative Markets Program
Transportation and Marketing Division
Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA
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1400 Independence Ave., SW
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202-720-8317

Internet

www.usda.gov/ams/tmdalp.htm

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)

Matching Support to Market Fresh Fruits and Vegetables and Strengthen Farmers' Markets. For Participating Low-Income, At-Risk Women, Infants and Children, the Program Provides Coupons or Checks to Obtain Locally Grown Fresh Produce from Farmers' Markets

The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), established in 1992, provides special coupons to WIC participants (low-income, at-risk women, infants and children) so that they can purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers' markets. FMNP is funded through a congressionally mandated set-aside in the WIC appropriation. The program has two goals: to provide fresh, nutritious, unprepared food, such as fruits and vegetables, from farmers' markets to WIC participants who are at nutritional risk; and to expand consumers' awareness and use of farmers' markets.

This program, operated in conjunction with the regular WIC Program, is offered in 30 states and other jurisdictions. State agencies may limit FMNP sales to specific foods that are locally grown to encourage participants to support the farmers in their own state.

Project Examples

- In Pennsylvania the FMNP operates in 67 counties at 280 market sites. Approximately 430 farmers participated in the 1997 market season. In 1996 the FMNP paid Pennsylvania farmers a total of \$1.1 million for fresh fruit and produce grown in Pennsylvania. At the same time, the Pennsylvania program supported 90,000 WIC participants who received checks which were redeemed for fresh produce at farmers' markets.
- The Iowa FMNP functions in 69 farmers' markets in 43 counties of the state serving approximately 40,000 WIC clients. Farmers participate in a short training course which outlines the rules and procedures of the program, and are certified to receive WIC checks at specific farmers' markets where they sell their fresh fruit and vegetables. WIC checks valuing \$650,000 were redeemed by Iowa farmers in 1996. Participating farmers indicated that approximately 25% of their farmers' market income resulted from their participation in the FMNP.
- The FMNP in the State of Maryland operates in all but three of the state's 21 counties and in the City of Baltimore. There are 45 participating farmers' markets which served more than 21,000 WIC households in 1996. During the same year

more than 400 farmers received a total of \$250,000 for their fresh fruits and vegetables as a result of participating in the FMNP. Many WIC participants had never shopped in a farmers' market before participating in the program, and continue to shop at farmers' markets after their WIC checks have been spent.

Application and Financial Information

Grants for administering the program are made to state health, agriculture and other agencies (or Indian tribes, bands, or intertribal councils or groups recognized by the Department of the Interior). Participating state agencies must initiate the process by applying for participation in the program.

The program requires a match from state, local, or private funds for the program in an amount that is equal to but not less than 30% of the total cost of the program (except Indian Tribal Organizations which may receive a negotiated match contribution that is less than 30% but not less than 10%). The matching requirement may be satisfied from state contributions that are made for similar programs. Federal FMNP benefits (coupons) may be issued only to

participants in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program WIC or to persons who are on a waiting list to receive WIC benefits.

The FMNP budget for FY 1996 and 1997 was \$6.75 million. Currently the program is authorized through 1998. The White House has recommended increasing funding for the FMNP up to \$12 million for 1998, although the actual level of funding is determined annually and must be approved by Congress.

Eligibility

WIC participants (i.e., pregnant, postpartum or breastfeeding women; infants over 4 months of age; and children up to 5 years of age) and (at the state's discretion) those who are on a waiting list to receive WIC benefits are eligible to receive FMNP coupons.

Farmers or farmers' markets located in communities with WIC Program sites may apply to be food vendors in the program. In states where the program is not currently operating, farmers should approach the appropriate state agency (e.g. Department of Agriculture or the Department of Health and Human Services) to urge them to develop a project, obtain state matching funds, and apply for federal funding to initiate the FMNP in their state.

Uses and Restrictions

All state agencies that desire to receive a FMNP grant must submit, for each fiscal year, a state plan to the Food and Consumer Service (FCS), USDA. States that received federal assistance under the Farmers' Market Coupon Demonstration Project, which was administered by FCS from 1989-1992, were "grandfathered" into the FMNP by Public Law 102-314. Other states interested in participating in the FMNP must first submit a state plan to the appropriate FCS regional office for approval. Approved plans are then reviewed and evaluated by the National Office (Supplemental Food Programs Division) according to criteria established by law. New state agencies are then selected based on the evaluation and the availability of funds. Local FMNP sites are selected by participating state agencies based on concentration of eligible WIC participants and access to farmers' markets.

Contact

Northeast Region

John Ghiorzi, Regional Director
(617) 565-6440

Mid-Atlantic Region

Diana Torrice, Acting Regional Director
(609) 259-5100
Southeast Region:
Charlie Simmons, Acting Director
(404) 562-7100

Midwest Region

Russ Circo, Regional Director
(312) 353-1780

Southwest Region

Sondra Ralph, Regional Director
(214) 290-9812

Mountain Plains Region

Ralph Anzur, Regional Director
(303) 844-0331

Western Region

Carol M. Fahey, Regional Director
(415) 705-1313

National Office

Stanley C. Garnett, Director.
Supplemental Food Programs Division,
Food and Consumer Service,
Department of Agriculture,
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 540,
Alexandria, VA 22302.
(703) 305-2746

Internet

<http://www.usda.gov/fcs/wic.htm>

V. Conservation and Resource Management

Conservation Farm Option (CFO)

Offers Flexible 10-year Conservation Contract Agreements with one Consolidated USDA Program Payment in lieu of a Host of Specified Payments

The CFO is a pilot conservation farm option program for eligible producers who have contract acreage under production flexibility contracts. They are provided a 10-year CFO contract as a single annual payment equivalent to the amount of the combined payments under other federal conservation programs.

This pilot program was created to foster innovation in natural resource protection and enhancement including for conserving soil, water, and related resources; promoting or improving water quality; restoring, protecting, and creating wetlands; developing and protecting wildlife habitat; and other similar conservation purposes. The CFO pilot program is intended to be simple, flexible, and should reward sustainable agricultural production practices and support locally led conservation efforts.

Project Examples

No project examples are available.

the conservation plan, so long as they provide environmental benefits.

Legislative Authority

Section 335 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996.

The CFO allows for a locally led approach by allowing individual or groups of farmers and ranchers or local work groups to implement innovative solutions to natural resource problems, and encourages implementation of sustainable agricultural production practices, such as resource-conserving crops and rotations.

Application and Financial Information

During the 10-year contract, the owner or producer receives annual payments for implementation. In Fiscal Year 1998 (FY98), Congress authorized a \$15 million CFO pilot program and funding for subsequent years at the following levels: FY99 at \$25 million; FY2000 at \$37.5; FY01 at \$50 million and FY02 at \$62.5 million.

The CFO allows farmers and ranchers to take risks to maximize environmental benefits with minimal land retirement, while maintaining agricultural outputs. The program is also meant to be used to leverage research and other ongoing local agricultural or natural resource conservation projects. No funds will be paid or transferred to any group, entity, or individual other than through the CFO contracts with individual producers.

Eligibility

Owners or operators with farms who produce wheat, feed grains, cotton and rice and who have a production flexibility contract under the Agricultural Market Transition Act are eligible for participation. Any individual organization, or entity may submit an application to be a CFO pilot project. Group projects selected as pilots will then subsequently enroll individual farmer participants. For individual pilot proposals, the single farm will be the sole participant.

Farmers may not be enrolled in CRP, WRP or EQIP and participate in CFO. However, an existing CRP, WRP or EQIP contact can be rolled into a CFO contract.

Contact

Initial contact should be made with the local office of the Farm Service Agency or the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

National Program Office

Ed Rall, Farm Service Agency
P.O. Box 2415 AG CODE 0519
Washington, DC 20013-2415
202-720-7795
E-mail: erall@wdc.fsa.usda.gov

Uses and Restrictions

Participants are required to develop and implement a conservation farm plan. The plan becomes part of the CFO contract for the 10-year period. CFO is not restricted as to what measures may be included in

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<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>
(Click "96 Farm Bill Conservation Provisions.")

Conservation Reserve Program

Offers Leases for Highly Erodible Cropland for 10 years if Landowners Establish and Maintain Perennial Vegetation and Agree to Leave the Land Idle for the Length of the Lease

The CRP offers landowners the opportunity to voluntarily convert cropland with high erosion rates and other environmentally sensitive cropland areas to permanent vegetative cover. Permanent cover options include grasses and legumes, tree plantings, and wildlife habitat. The program goals are: to reduce soil erosion, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, improve water quality, protect the soils on the nation's cropland base, demonstrate good land stewardship and improve rural aesthetics.

The program aims to protect the nation's long-term ability to produce food and fiber by effectively managing agricultural resources, reducing soil erosion, reducing sedimentation, improving water quality, creating a better habitat for fish and wildlife, providing some needed income support for farmers and curbing production of some surplus commodities.

Financial and technical assistance are available to participants to assist in the establishment of a permanent vegetative cover.

Project Examples

- Marginal cropland in Mississippi, planted to soybeans, is at continual risk of erosion due to sandy, silty soils and a slope too great for tillage. One landowner chose to convert a portion of his land to pine trees as permanent cover through CRP. The cost of planting was about \$60/acre, including the seedlings and paying a contractor for machine planting. CRP paid the landowner \$30/acre, or 50 percent of the cost of conversion, plus \$36/acre annual rental payment. The land is protected from severe erosion with tree cover, and additional income could come from thinning the trees in 13-16 years.
- In Wisconsin an elderly dairy farming couple with no son or daughter to take over the farm wanted to sell their dairy operation, but could not find a young farmer interested in buying it. Their land has shallow soils, has been contour-stripped since the 1950s, and is highly erodible. The couple was able to sell their cows and machinery and put 200 acres into CRP (leaving the remaining 100 acres in pasture and woodlot). For 10 years they receive \$80/acre for their land which is seeded to grass to protect it from erosion.
- In New Mexico, certain highly erodible land had a history of being cultivated when wheat and soybean prices were high, and abandoned when prices dropped, leaving the topsoil exposed to wind erosion. Some of these lands were entered

into CRP, enabling farmers to plant a cover grass to protect and conserve the topsoil for future cultivation after the 10 years of the CRP, and they still receive income for 10 years from the land.

Legislative Authority

Food Security Act of 1985

Application and Financial Information

To initiate the application procedure, a landowner must submit a rental rate per acre bid to the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office that serves the area in which the farm or ranch is located during the announced sign up period. Those whose bids are accepted will be notified from seven to 90 days from the date of submission of the application.

County FSA offices will provide producers the maximum acceptable rental rate for the acreage offered. All offers will be screened at both the local and national levels to determine the suitability of the acreage and acceptability of the rental rate bid. In addition, offers will be evaluated in terms of cost for the environmental benefits obtained. Acres accepted will be limited to pre-announced levels for each sign up period. Financial assistance ranges from \$50 to \$50,000 with \$5,324 being the average nationally.

Eligibility

Any individual, partnership, association, Indian tribal ventures corporation, estate, trust, other business enterprise or legal entity and, whenever applicable, a state, a political subdivision of a state, or any agency thereof owning or operating private croplands, and state or local government croplands may apply.

Uses and Restrictions

Eligible owners or operators may place highly erodible or environmentally sensitive cropland into a 10-15 year contract. The participant, in return for annual payments, agrees to implement a conservation plan approved by the local conservation district for converting highly erodible cropland or environmentally sensitive land to a less intensive use (i.e., cropland must be planted with a vegetative cover, such as perennial grasses, legumes, forbs, shrubs, or trees).

The cropland must be owned or operated for at least three years prior to the close of the annual sign-up period, unless the land was acquired by will or succession or the FSA determines that ownership was not acquired for the purpose of placing the land in the conservation reserve.

Contact

For additional information, contact your local Farm Service Agency Office. (Consult the local phone directory under U.S. Government, U.S. Department of Agriculture.)

National Program Office

Bob Stevenson
Program Administrator
Conservation Reserve Program
Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency,
Ag Box 0513
Washington, DC 20013
202-720-5295; 202-720-4619 (fax)

Internet

<http://aspe.os.dhhs.gov/96cfda/p10069.htm>

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Provides Technical, Financial and Educational Assistance to Farmers and Ranchers to Address Significant Natural Resource Concerns and Objectives

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) was established in the 1996 Farm Bill to provide a single, voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers to address significant natural resource needs and objectives. At the national level, half of the program's resources are targeted to livestock-related natural resource problems and the other half to more general conservation priorities.

EQIP replaces four previous programs: the Agricultural Conservation Program, Water Quality Incentives Program, Great Plains Conservation Program, and the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program.

EQIP works primarily in priority areas where there are serious and critical environmental needs and concerns. In general, priority areas are defined as watersheds, regions or areas of special environmental sensitivity or those having significant soil, water, or related natural resource concerns. High priority is also given to areas where state or local governments offer financial or technical assistance and where agricultural improvements will help meet water quality and other environmental objectives. Highest priority will be given to farmers and ranchers that face the most serious threats to soil, water, and related natural resources including grazing lands, wetlands, and wildlife habitat. All EQIP activities must be carried out according to a conservation plan.

Project Examples

Since this is a new program established under the 1996 Farm Bill, no project examples are available at this time.

assistance for up to 75 percent of the cost of certain conservation practices, such as grassed waterways, filter strips, manure management facilities, and wildlife habitat enhancement.

Legislative Authority

1996 Farm Bill

Contract applications are accepted throughout the year. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conducts an evaluation of the environmental benefits the producer offers. Offers are then ranked according to previously approved criteria developed with the advice of the local work group. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committee approves for funding the highest priority applications based on the previously developed criteria. Applications are ranked according to environmental benefits achieved, and are weighted against the costs of applying the proposed practices. Higher rankings are given to plans addressing priority resource concerns. EQIP seeks to maximize environmental benefits per dollar spent.

Application and Financial Information

EQIP offers five- to 10-year contracts that provide incentive payments and cost sharing for conservation practices called for in a site-specific plan. Incentive payments are made to enable a producer to perform a land management practice that would not otherwise be initiated without financial assistance. The payments may reimburse the producer for up to 100 percent of the costs of carrying out the practice, for no longer than three years. Land management practices are conservation practices that require site-specific techniques and methods to conserve natural resources. Examples include nutrient management, manure management, integrated pest management, irrigation water management, grazing management, and wildlife habitat management. EQIP also provides cost-share

Funding for EQIP comes from the Federal Government's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), which funds several other USDA conservation programs. CCC funding does not require annual appropriations, and the program is less vulnerable to budget cuts.

EQIP is funded at \$200 million per year through the year 2002. Conservation practices related to livestock production are targeted with these funds and will receive 50 percent of the funding. Total cost-share and incentive payments are limited to \$10,000 per person per year and \$50,000 for the length of the contract.

Eligibility

Only people who are engaged in livestock or agricultural production can apply for this program. Eligible land includes cropland, rangeland, pasture, forest land, and other farm or ranch lands in identified priority areas.

Owners of large confined livestock operations are not eligible for cost-share assistance for animal waste management storage or treatment facilities, although technical and financial assistance for other conservation practices on the farm or ranch may be provided. The definition of a large confined livestock operation will be determined for each state by the NRCS State Conservationist, after consultation with the NRCS State Technical Committee. USDA will ensure that cost-share assistance goes only to small- and medium-sized livestock operations.

In accordance with the 1996 Farm Bill, the program is available primarily in priority areas where there are significant natural resource needs and objectives established. For Fiscal Year 1997, at least 65% of the funds will be used in locally-identified priority areas, and up to 35% can be used for other significant statewide natural resource concerns.

The rationale for placing program emphasis in priority areas is that more resources will be directed to address serious and critical environmental needs and concerns. These priority areas are determined by a process that begins with local work groups, involving local conservation districts, USDA's NRCS, FSA, FSA county committees, Cooperative Extension Service, tribes, and other units of government interested in natural resource conservation. These groups conduct a conservation needs assessment, identify local priorities, determine ranking criteria, and then send their recommendations for priority areas and program policy to NRCS for approval in consultation with FSA.

Uses and Restrictions

All activities under this program must work toward conservation of natural resources. All approved applicants are responsible for developing and submitting a conservation plan that will address the situa-

tion on the applicant's land relevant to the identified conservation needs or objectives that are to be addressed. A conservation plan is developed by the producer, with the assistance of NRCS or other public or private natural resource professionals, with approval by the local conservation district. The plan is used to establish an EQIP contract.

Contact

To obtain more information on EQIP, contact the NRCS, FSA, the Cooperative Extension Service, or your local conservation district. Your local NRCS should be able to help you assess if your land is within a priority area and tell you what have been identified as state priorities for conservation activities under this program. Your local USDA Service Center is listed in the telephone book under U.S. Department of Agriculture.

National Program Office

Jeff Loser, Program Manager or Robert Molleur
Environmental Quality Incentives Program
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, D.C. 20013
Jeff Loser: 202-720-1834
Robert Molleur: 202-720-1845
Email: jeff.loser@usda.gov

Internet

<http://www.nhq.ncrs.usda.gov/OPA/FB96OPA/eqipfact.html>

Farmland Protection Program

Provides Cooperation and Funding to Acquire Conservation Easements to Protect Prime, Unique or other Productive Soil and Limit its Conversion to Non-Agricultural Uses

The new Farmland Protection Program provides funds to help purchase rights to keep productive farmland in agricultural use. Working through existing programs, USDA joins with state, tribal, or local governments to acquire conservation easements or other interests from landowners. USDA provides up to 50 percent of the costs of purchasing easements. (For the FPP, a conservation easement is an assigned right prohibiting any development, subdivision or practice that would damage the agricultural value or productivity of the farmland. It is legally recorded in an agreement between a landowner and a qualified organization, and restricts land to agriculture and open space use. Transactions may qualify for a tax deduction.)

The FPP was designed to help protect quality farmland in the face of urban growth. Since 1960, an average of 1.5 million acres of farmland have been converted to other uses each year, often resulting in permanent loss of valuable topsoil and agricultural land.

Project Examples

Examples of funded projects are not available as of this writing. While funding has been approved for the first round of projects, the negotiations for these projects are incomplete.

Legislative Authority

Section 388 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (1996 Farm Bill)

Application and Financial Information

When funds are available, an annual notification is published in the Federal Register informing the public that applications will be accepted. If you are considering participation in the FPP, contact your Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) state conservationist.

The state conservationist may consult with the NRCS State Technical Committee and review the requests for participation by using a ranking system of USDA priorities to determine: the likelihood of conversion considering developmental pressure; zoning; utility availability and related factors; the quality of the land considering the soils; economic viability; size and product sales; and other factors including its historical, scenic and environmental qualities.

Eligibility

To qualify, farmland must: be land with prime, unique, or other productive soil; be part of a pending offer from a state, tribe, or local farmland protection program; be privately owned; have a conservation plan; be large enough to sustain agricultural production; be accessible to markets for what the land produces; have adequate infrastructure and agricultural support services; and have surrounding parcels of land that can support long-term agricultural production. The pending offer must be for the purpose of protecting topsoil by limiting non-agricultural uses of the land.

The NRCS will not enroll land that is owned in fee title by an agency of the United States, or land that is already subject to an easement or deed restriction that limits the conversion of the land to non-agricultural use. The NRCS will not enroll otherwise eligible lands in which it determines that the protection provided by FPP would not be effective because of on-site or off-site conditions.

Uses and Restrictions

To be selected for participation in the FPP, a pending offer must provide for the acquisition of an easement or other interests in land for a minimum duration of 30 years, with priority given to those offers providing permanent protection.

With funds available for fiscal year 1997 limited to \$2 million, the FPP was designed to take advantage of conservation programs such as the Wetland Reserve Program, the Conservation Reserve Program, the En-

vironmental Quality Incentives Program, the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, and other state, tribal, or local conservation programs that have complimentary objectives of the FPP. This will allow the use of these complementary programs to protect additional lands and stretch farmland protection efforts. The USDA submitted a budget request of \$18 million for the FPP for FY 1998. Indications are that Congress will authorize the full amount for FY 1998.

Contact

For more information or to request an application, contact the NRCS State Conservationist or FPP Coordinator.

National Program Office

Fen C. Hunt
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202-720-7671; 202-690-0639 (fax)
email: fhunt@usda.gov

Internet

[http://www.nhq.ncrs.usda.gov/OPA/FB96OPA/
FPP_rfp.html](http://www.nhq.ncrs.usda.gov/OPA/FB96OPA/FPP_rfp.html)

Forestry Incentives Program (FIP)

Offers Cost-Sharing for Tree Planting, Timber Stand Improvements and Related Practices on Non-Industrial Private Forest Lands

The FIP was originally authorized in 1978. Forest maintenance and reforestation activities resulting from the FIP provides numerous natural resource benefits including reduced wind and soil erosion and enhanced water quality and wildlife habitat. The FIP's cost-sharing for these measures helps eligible private landowners, whose small parcels represent the majority of the nation's forest lands.

The FIP is intended to assure the nation's ability to meet future demand for sawtimber, pulpwood and quality hardwoods by planting more trees and placing more forest land under good forest management. FIP also was designed to improve timber stands, which help to sequester greenhouse gases.

The FIP is a nationwide program available in counties designated on the basis of a Forest Service survey of total eligible private timber acreage that is potentially suitable for production of timber products. Normally the length of the program is from one to 10 years. There may be certain restrictions on time limits and on certain practices to be performed.

Project Examples

What follows are examples of how the program has been used to address different needs:

- In Vermont, a farm had crop land which extended to the banks of a river. Annual tillage operations resulted in erosion with direct runoff into the river. FIP provided an opportunity for the private landowner to convert this parcel of farmland to forest. Tree planting and necessary management practices were carried out through a cost-share arrangement whereby 65% of the costs of approved forestry practices were paid through the FIP. In addition to the cost-share benefits, the landowner also benefitted from the reduction in soil erosion and the improvement in water and air quality during the period the timber will be growing.
- In Alabama the FIP is designed to address the needs of some of the state's estimated 28,000 farmers with limited financial resources who historically have had limited exposure to forestry programs. In an effort to recruit these farmers to the program, the State of Alabama offers: continuous year-round sign-up, the opportunity to sign-up on-farm through state outreach efforts, and assistance from Alabama A & M University and Tuskegee University in locating and working with eligible farmers to develop forest management plans and train farmers for applying forestry practices on their own.

Legislative Authority

Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978.

Application and Financial Information

Federal cost-share money is available—with a limit of \$10,000 per person per year and the stipulation that no more than 65 percent of the cost may be paid. To find out if your county participates in the FIP, check with your local USDA office, State Forester, conservation district, or Cooperative Extension office.

Eligible persons may apply at any time during the year at the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office for the county in which the land is located. From date of application, response is generally given in 30 to 60 days. Financial assistance ranges from \$50 and \$10,000 per year, with an average of \$1,600. Funding is limited, and priority areas for participation in the program are established at the local level.

The state forester provides technical advice in developing a forest management plan and helps find approved assistance, if needed, for completing the FIP work. In addition, the state forestry agency must certify that the project has been completed satisfactorily before cost-share payments can be made.

Eligibility

A private individual, group, association, Native American tribe or other native group, corporation (except corporations whose stocks are publicly traded) or other legal entity which owns "non-industrial" private forest lands capable of producing industrial wood crops is eligible to apply for cost-sharing assistance. This program is available to eligible landowners in the United States or any commonwealth, territory or possession of the United States.

To be eligible for cost-share assistance under the FIP, a landowner must:

- Own no more than 1,000 acres of eligible forest land;
- Be a private landowner of a non-industrial forest;
- Have land that is suitable for conversion from non-forest land into forest land (afforestation); for reforestation; or for improved forest management; and
- Have land that is capable of producing marketable timber crops and meets minimum productivity standards established for the FIP. (At least 10 acres of eligible forest land is required for the FIP.)

Uses and Restrictions

Available practices under FIP are:

- Tree planting;
- Improving a stand of forest trees; and
- Site preparation for natural regeneration.

Contact

For more information on this program, contact NRCS, Forest Service, FSA, the Cooperative Extension Service, state forestry agencies, or your local conservation district. Your local USDA Service Center is listed in the telephone book under U.S. Department of Agriculture. Information is also available here on NRCS's World Wide Web site.

National Office

Jim McMullen

National FIP Manager

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Department of Agriculture

P.O. Box 2890, Washington, DC 20013

202-720-1870

Internet

<http://www.nhq.ncrs.usda.gov/OPA/FB96OPA/FIPfact.html>

Forest Legacy Program

Authorizes the USDA Forest Service to Purchase Permanent Conservation Easements on Private Forest Lands

Congress created the FLP to help landowners, state and local governments, and private land trusts identify and protect environmentally important forest lands threatened by present and future conversion to non-forest uses. FLP's success depends on the private landowner who wants to conserve the special values of his or her forested land for future generations. FLP buys from the landowner at fair market value certain land use rights, such as the right to develop land, with the dual aims of promoting effective forest land management and protecting the land from conversion to non-forest uses. Priority is given to forest lands that possess important scenic, cultural, and recreation resources, fish and wildlife habitats, water resources and other ecological values.

Each state drafts a forest conservation plan identifying "environmentally important" forest lands that include:

- Forest buffers that stabilize soil and provide a natural filter for potential pollutants that might get into streams and rivers.
- Recreational resources such as places to swim, hike and camp.
- Fish and wildlife habitat such as clear, cold brooks for trout and dense forest cover to help deer survive cold, snowy winters.
- Sites of cultural value like unique geology, historic settlements and artifacts.
- Areas with beautiful scenery to enjoy from trails or roads.
- Areas where timber and wood fiber grow rapidly.
- Areas having other ecological value such as clean air and water.

Project Examples

- In Massachusetts, FLP provided \$1.5 million to purchase a 73-acre easement on a critical tract in a 1,200-acre project to protect Estabrook Woods, an area Henry David Thoreau identified as deserving conservation.
- Vermont received more than \$2 million in FLP funds to purchase a 31,450-acre easement in the "Northeast Kingdom" region of the state. The governor supports the effort as a vehicle to protect the natural character of Vermont.
- In Washington state, the Forest Service, Weyerhaeuser Corporation, the Trust for Public Land, and other groups have used FLP support to protect and preserve a "green corridor" along I-90 from Seattle through the Cascade Mountains.

agency that deals with forestry and natural resource issues. If that office indicates that the program is not available in your state, ask the state forester to pursue the possibility of applying for FLP support to initiate the program. States may opt for the program to be administered through the federal office or through a state agency as a state grant program.

The FLP provides federal funding for up to 75 percent of the cost of conservation easements and fee interests on forest lands that are threatened with conversion. The program requires that 25 percent of the cost of a Forest Legacy project come from non-federal sources, which may include state and local governments and nonprofit organizations. The non-federal contribution may come from matching funds or in-kind contributions and may include direct and indirect costs associated with planning, acquisition, capital improvement, management, or administrative activities. Donations of land or conservation easements to land trusts may count toward the match (if they

Application and Financial Information

State participation in the FLP is voluntary. To find out if FLP is operating in your state, contact your state

meet specific criteria, discuss this at the time of application with your local contacts for FLP).

Eligibility

When FLP was created in 1990, it was limited to Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, and Washington State. Today the program is potentially open to any state with threatened forest that has an "Assessment of Need" approved by the Forest Service. The assessment is prepared by the state forestry or natural resource agency--whichever is designated by the governor to serve as the state lead agency for FLP. Currently only 14 states qualify for FLP funds by having approved plans: California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, and Washington. (In addition, Delaware, Minnesota, Tennessee, and Puerto Rico are currently preparing plans for approval.)

For a tract of land to be eligible for an FLP easement it must: 1) be within a FLP area as defined by the state's "Assessment of Need"; and 2) contain less than 10% open area. Non-forested farms and villages may be included in an FLP area if they are an integral part of the landscape and are logically within the boundaries of a Forest Legacy area, but cannot be included in the easement. Land in Indian reservations and tribal lands are also eligible.

Uses and Restrictions

The FLP provides federal funds for:

- purchase of conservation easements;
- fee acquisition;
- grants to states for the above activities;
- surveys, appraisals, title work, and other activities to facilitate donations of and or easements for FLP purposes; and
- state FLP planning and administration.

Willing owners who are accepted into the program can sell all or part of their ownership rights, such as the right to develop the land, to the federal government. The government will pay for these rights at full fair market value. The owner keeps any remaining property rights and usually continues to live on and work/manage the property. Property taxes are paid by the owner on any retained rights as determined by local assessors.

Enrolled landowners are required to follow a management plan designed for their forest. Forest

management activities, including timber harvesting, and recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, and hiking, may be permitted if they are consistent with the management plan.

Owners may sell their retained rights to other buyers at any time. If only development rights are sold, the federal government would hold a "conservation easement" on the property and landowners would be committed to managing their property according to the easement that they have voluntarily sold.

Land trusts, which helped conceive and enact the FLP, are encouraged to cooperate with FLP activities in states where the program is in operation. Land trusts can cooperate in the process by: helping to prepare the assessment of need, bringing landowners and other project planners into FLP agreements, helping to structure and negotiate projects, assisting in acquisition of land, helping to provide the cost-share match, monitoring easements, and participating in state grant programs.

Currently no forested land on farms is protected in FLP projects, but about 9 percent of all private forest lands in the U.S. is owned by farmers, so the potential for such exists. There are a few states which are currently undergoing the initial planning process for FLP and where forested lands on farms will play a much larger role in FLP activities.

Contact

For more information about FLP, contact the state agency that manages forestry issues in your state.

National Program Office

Ted Beauvais
USFS Cooperative Forestry-Forest Legacy Program
201 14th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250
202-205-1190; 202-205-1271 (fax)

Internet

<http://willow.ncfes.umn.edu/coop/flp.htm>

Partners for Wildlife

Provides Technical and/or Financial Assistance for Wildlife Habitat Restoration

Partners for Wildlife, a program initiated in 1987, enables the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to work in voluntary partnership with private landowners interested in restoring wetlands and other important wildlife habitats. The program has two major objectives. First, it intends to make a major, tangible contribution to improving the quantity and quality of wetlands, native grasses, and other important habitats through on-the-ground implementation of habitat restoration projects. Its other major objective is to stimulate active involvement of private landowners in the stewardship of wetlands and other federal trust species habitats. A major motivation for this second program objective is that over 74 percent of wetlands and about 95 percent of restorable wetlands in the U.S. are in the hands of private owners. The USFWS recognizes the potential value of enlisting the active support of private landowners in restoring and maintaining wildlife habitat for future conservation efforts in the U.S.

The USFWS provides financial and technical assistance to private landowners through voluntary cooperative agreements. Under cooperative agreements, landowners agree to maintain restoration projects as specified in the agreement, but retain full control of the land. Landowners and national, state, and local organizations can serve as partners with the USFWS in carrying out restoration work on private lands.

Project Examples

The following are a few of the thousands of restoration projects supported by the Partners for Wildlife Program since 1987:

- Restoration of a cottonwood-willow riparian habitat on an Arizona ranch involved USFWS support to construct interior fencing and a solar-powered pump for an alternative water source for livestock. The fencing reduced habitat destruction by livestock and the new water source enabled cattle to continue to graze upland areas around the project site. The Nature Conservancy and Arizona Fish and Game Department collaborated with the owners and the USFWS. The project is beneficial to the endangered Gila top minnow, the Huachuca water umbel (a native riparian plant) and several species of neotropical migratory birds.

- An Illinois landowner collaborating with the USFWS and the Richardson Wildlife Foundation has returned most of 1,500 acres of agricultural land at the headwaters of the Green River to a prairie wetland complex. The USFWS provided support to survey the land and design the restoration work and financial assistance to acquire water control structures. The landowner did much of the earth work himself, installed water control structures, and planted warm season grasses to reconstruct a pre-settlement landscape. The result of the seven-year partnership is a

complex of 10 wetlands totaling over 170 acres interspersed with 1,200 acres of native grass seedlings.

- The Dick Creek Project in Montana enhanced 105 acres of Jones Lake, restored five wetlands totaling 74 acres and 1.5 miles of in-stream habitat, enhanced nine miles of in-stream/riparian habitat, and restored 1.5 miles of riparian habitat. The completed project provides in-stream habitat for waist slope cutthroat, wetland and riparian habitat for migratory birds, and demonstrates the mutual benefit of agricultural activity coexisting with fish and wildlife conservation. Contributing partners on the project were the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks; the landowners; Trout Unlimited; National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Blackfoot Challenge; Ducks Unlimited; and the USFWS.

Application and Financial Information

Contact the appropriate regional office (see list below). Please note that this program has a waiting list of private landowners interested in participation. Your regional contact should be able to give you an idea of the appropriateness of your proposed project and probability of its support by Partners for Wildlife.

The program aims for a 40-percent non-federal match for each project. Landowners and partner organizations provide this matching support.

In FY 1996 the Partners for Wildlife Program had a budget of \$10.3 million; in FY 1997 the budget is about \$12.5 million, with approximately the same amount estimated for FY 1998.

Eligibility

Any private landowner owning lands of past importance as wildlife habitat which has potential for restoration to its original habitat can apply for consideration in this program.

Uses and Restrictions

Landowners voluntarily offer the land base for restoration for a fixed term (at least 10 years although many extend the term). The program emphasizes the restoration of formerly degraded wetlands, native grasslands, riparian areas, and other habitats to conditions as close to natural as is feasible.

Contact

Region 1 (WA, OR, ID, CA, NV)

Coordinator: Marilyn Friley
911 North East 11th Avenue
Portland, OR 97232-4181
503-231-2047

Region 2 (AZ, NM, TX, OK)

Coordinator: Mike McCollum
711 Stadium Drive E; Suite 252
Arlington, TX 76011
817-885-7830

Region 3 (MN, IO, MO, WI, IL, IN, MI, OH)

Coordinator: Dan Stinnett
1 Federal Drive, Federal Building
Fort Snelling, MN 55111-4056
612-725-3570

Region 4 (LA, AR, MS, AL, GA, FL, SC, NC, KY, TN)

Coordinator: Ronnie Haynes
1875 Century Blvd
Atlanta, GA 30345
404-679-7138

Region 5 (ME, NH, VT, CN, MA, DE, RI, NY, PA, MD, VA, WV, NJ)

Coordinator: Mike Horton
300 Westgate Center Drive
Hadly, MA 01035-9589
413-253-8630

Region 6 (ND, SD, NE, KS, MT, WY, UT, CO)

Coordinator: Rick Dornfeld
134 Union Blvd, POB 25486
Denver Federal Center
Denver, CO 80225
303-236-7400, ext. 241

Region 7 (AK, HI)

Coordinator: Anthony R. DeGange
1011 East Tudor Road
Anchorage, AK 99503
907-786-3492

National Program Office

Charlie Rewa
4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 400
Arlington, VA 22203
703-358-2201

Sustainable Development Challenge Grant Program (SDCG)

Encourages Community, Business and Government to Work Cooperatively to Develop Locally Oriented Initiatives that Enhance Environmental Quality Management while Promoting Sustainable Development

The SDCG Program is a competitive grants program aimed at encouraging communities to address their long-term ecological well-being by creating plans and activities that recognize the relationships and interdependency of environmental quality, economic prosperity and community well-being for a community's long-term sustainability.

SDCG seeks to encourage diverse community participation and expand participation in decisions and activities that define a community's environmental future. Proposed projects should be designed by community stakeholders to ensure that those with the best insights into problems and opportunities are involved in creating community-based sustainable development solutions. Successful proposals under the challenge grant program should become self-sustaining at the end of the project period, without ongoing reliance on EPA funds.

Proposals that place an emphasis on city/metropolitan-related projects are encouraged. For 1997, about 80 percent of available funding will go to projects with an urban focus, reflecting the approximately 80 percent of the U.S. population that resides in urban versus rural areas.

Project Examples

In the 1996 pilot year of the program, the following projects were among those funded:

- A grant of \$48,000 to Community Supported Agriculture in the Mid-Atlantic Region helped establish a network of 26 organic farms providing produce for local urban residents in the mid-Atlantic region. Access to a pesticide-free food supply for urban residents, the potential to diminish agricultural runoff to the Chesapeake Bay, and supporting small farms in the region all attracted EPA to the project.
- The Olympic Peninsula Foundation received a grant of \$100,000 to help establish a wood products certification program in the state of Washington. The project involves defining and promoting those practices that can increase environmental quality while improving the wood industry's long-term viability. The project is designed to encourage broad participation by all players in the wood products production chain and offers certification to foresters, landowners, mill operators, manufacturers, and retailers.
- The University of North Carolina Arboretum and partner organizations received \$50,000 to demonstrate how native grasses can be grown

for a regional handmade crafts industry. Funds will be used to investigate production techniques to protect land and water resources by: siting gardens along riparian areas to reduce polluted runoff and increase natural buffering capacity, cutting pesticide and fertilizer use to protect water quality, and selecting plants for production that allow artists to reduce their use of artificial chemical dyes.

Application and Financial Information

Applicants may compete for funding in two ranges: (1) \$50,000 or less, and (2) between \$50,001 and \$250,000. Applicants may submit multiple proposals, but each proposal must be for a separate and distinct project. No organization may receive funding for more than one proposal each year. In addition, projects awarded will be ineligible for future competition for this program.

This program is intended to provide seed money to leverage a broader public and private investment in sustainability activities. As a result, the program requires a minimum non-federal match of at least 20 percent of the project budget; EPA strongly encourages more. The match can come from public

or private sources and can include in-kind goods and services. No federal funds, however, can be used as matching funds without specific statutory authority.

Proposal deadlines each year are expected to be in mid-August. Proposals are evaluated, and final selections made, by a panel of representatives from EPA's Regional and Headquarters offices. Although the selections are made nationally, awards are made, administered, and evaluated by EPA's Regional Offices. Applicants selected for awards are contacted by the appropriate EPA Regional Office, and are asked to submit a full grant application. EPA regional contacts (listed below) will provide information and answer questions.

EPA uses the following criteria to evaluate project proposals: sustainability (50 points); community commitment and contribution (25 points); and measurable results (25 points). Media visibility of projects and collaborators appears to be attractive to EPA.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants include: 1) Incorporated non-profit (or not-for-profit) private agencies, institutions and organizations; and 2) public (state, county, regional or local) agencies, institutions and organizations, including those of federally-recognized Indian tribes. While state agencies are eligible, they are encouraged to work in partnership with community groups to strengthen their proposals.

Ineligible applicants include: individuals, for-profit businesses, nonprofit organizations designated as 501(c) (4), principally engaged in lobbying, and federal government agencies. (Although not eligible for this challenge grant, EPA encourages individuals and for-profit businesses, as well as other government organizations, to participate as partners with eligible applicants. The nature of building sustainable environments where people live requires the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, and the level and breadth of commitment to the proposed project by public and private organizations in the community will be factors in selecting projects.)

Uses and Restrictions

EPA provides a list of the types of projects which could be funded, but stresses that project proposals should not be limited to ideas listed below.

- alternative development patterns and the range of environmental, economic and community benefits

associated with them.

- a cutting-edge approach to cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated property including a comprehensive, interagency, inter-governmental approach to the challenges of abandoned, idled, or under-used properties that blight the landscape of our urban centers.

- how a stakeholder group can comprehensively identify the multiple sources of pollution contributing to environmental problems within their watershed and collaboratively develop solutions to address these causes to the satisfaction of all stakeholders.

- a cooperative effort among environmental groups, business interests, and community leaders to design and implement a community-based strategy for ecological-based tourism.

Contact

Rosemary Monahan, US EPA Region I

(617) 565-3551

States: ME, NH, VT, MA, CT, RI

Anita Street, US EPA Region 2

(212) 637-3590

States & Territories: NY, NJ, PR, VI

Theresa Martella, US EPA Region 3

(215) 566-5423

States: DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, WV

Cory Berish, US EPA Region 4

(404) 562-8276

States: AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN

Daniel Werbie, US EPA Region 5

(312) 353-5791

States: MN, WI, MI, IL, IN, OH

Karen Alvarez, US EPA Region 6

(214) 665-7273

States: AR, LA, NM, OK, TX

Dick Sumpter, US EPA Region 7

(913) 551-7661

States: KS, MO, NE, IA

David Schaller, US EPA Region 8

(202) 312-6146

States: CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

Restores and Protects Wetlands on Private Property, Providing Financial Incentives to Enhance Wetlands in Exchange for Retiring Agricultural Land

The WRP helps farmers and other landowners take agricultural lands out of production and restore them as wetlands. The program is administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) with assistance from the State Technical Committees. The NRCS provides technical information about restoring wetlands and financial assistance for conservation measures.

There are three sign-up options: a permanent easement, a 30-year easement, or a restoration agreement. An easement, for the purposes of WRP, is a legal document filed at the courthouse along with the property deed specifying the land planned to be restored to wetland will remain intact and that nothing will occur to destroy that wetland for the period outlined in the document. The easement also describes the activities that cannot be carried out on the land.

Under all three options, the landowner retains ownership of the land, pays taxes, and controls access and use of the land for purposes compatible with the restoration.

- If you grant the federal government a permanent easement, the government will pay 100 percent of the appraised value of the land (based on recent sales of similar lands for agricultural purposes). The government also pays 100 percent of the restoration costs with a permanent easement. You will receive payment for the easement at the time of closing.
- Under the 30-year option, the easement is purchased for 50 to 75 percent of the property's appraised value, and the government will pay 50 to 75 percent of the restoration costs.
- Under a restoration agreement, a 15-year contract is made between you and the government. No easement is recorded on the deed, and you are not compensated for the contract area. The USDA will pay 75% of restoration costs, with the remaining 25 percent being your responsibility.

Project Examples

Examples of situations appropriate for the WRP include:

- On the Mississippi delta floodplain in Louisiana, one farmer cultivated rice in a zone of ridge and swale topography with heavy clay soil. The drainage to the Mississippi river had been blocked and water often backed up, flooding the field, resulting in no harvest or inability to even plant during some wet years. The WRP agreement was to restore the hydrology of 640 acres by installing small dikes and outlets at the swales creating shallow water areas. Planting of bottom land hardwoods along the ridges further improved the land for wildlife habitat. A permanent easement paid the farmer a one-time fee of \$500/acre, covered 100 percent of the restoration costs, and still enabled him to hold title to the land. The farmer now rents out duck blinds to hunters for \$2,000-4,000 each season.

- In the previous example, if the landowner chose a 30-year easement, the same deed arrangement would be made, but just for the 30 years rather than as a permanent easement. WRP would have paid 75 percent of the restoration costs and 75 percent of the agricultural value of the land to the landowner.

- A dairy farmer in northern New England had continuous problems with a 30-acre hayfield within the floodplain of an adjacent river. Despite extensive ditching and other attempts to remove the water, some years the land was too wet to plow. The farmer opted for a permanent easement in the WRP to restore the 30 acres to wetland. He received a one-time payment of \$500/acre, the costs of ditch plugging were reimbursed, and he now has the multiple benefits of a one-acre shallow pond which attracts migratory waterfowl and other wildlife to his property.

Legislative Authority

Food Security Act of 1985.

Application and Financial Information

To participate in the WRP, visit the local NRCS office, sign an "intent to participate," and select one of the three contract options. (See "Overview" above).

Landowners work with NRCS personnel to draw up a preliminary plan or Wetland Restoration Plan of Operations (WRPO), which describes the types of practices allowable on the land, any necessary structures, and the estimated costs of restoration.

Once a landowner enters into an agreement, he or she is responsible for the maintenance of any practices outlined in the WRPO for the life of the agreement.

The amount of taxes to be paid on the easement area is determined by the local taxing authority; NRCS has no authority regarding property or other tax issues. You should seek this information before entering the WRP.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the program, a landowner must have a clear title and own the land for at least 12 months before the end of the sign-up period (except in the case of inheritance). The land must be restorable to wetland conditions. Eligible lands include wetlands farmed under natural conditions, farmed wetlands, prior converted cropland, commenced converted wetlands, farmed wetlands pasture, stream corridors, or land substantially altered by flooding. Your local NRCS office can help you decide if your land is eligible.

Uses and Restrictions

The landowner continues to control access to the land—and may lease the land—for hunting, fishing, and other undeveloped recreational activities. (Some activities may be allowed, but require written permission, such as cutting timber or cutting hay after nesting season.) At any time, a landowner may request additional activities be evaluated to determine if they are compatible uses for the site. This request may include such items as permission to cut hay, graze livestock or harvest wood products. Compatible uses are allowed if they are fully consistent with the protection and enhancement of the wetland.

Contact

For more information on restoring wetlands, contact a local USDA Service Center, Cooperative Extension, or the soil and water conservation district office.

National Program Office

Robert Misso
Wetlands Reserve Program
6014 South Building
Washington, D.C.
202-690-0848; 202-690-1462 (fax)

Internet

<http://www.nhq.ncrs.usda.gov/OPA/FB96OPA/WRPfact.html>.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)

Offers Cost-Sharing and Technical Assistance to Improve Wildlife Habitat

The new WHIP program is designed to help landowners and those who are in control of acreage develop and preserve important wildlife habitat for future generations. The program offers technical assistance and cost-sharing opportunities for developing a wildlife habitat development plan and for managing the land in accordance with that plan.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will work with state and local partners to establish wildlife habitat priorities in each state. NRCS will provide cost-share payments up to 75 percent of the cost of installing wildlife habitat development practices on the land. The total cost-share amount cannot exceed \$10,000 per agreement. Agreements are for a five- to 10-year period.

Project Examples

There are no examples of funded projects as of this writing. The program will be implemented upon publication of the final rule in the Federal Register.

Legislative Authority

The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (1996 Farm Bill).

Application and Financial Information

WHIP applications will be accepted at local USDA Service Centers or conservation district offices. They may also be accepted by cooperating conservation partners approved or designated by NRCS.

Participants work with NRCS to prepare a wildlife habitat development plan in consultation with the local conservation district. This agreement generally lasts from five to 10 years from the date the agreement is signed. The agreement describes the landowner's goals for improving wildlife habitat, includes a list of practices and schedule for installing them, and details the steps necessary to maintain the habitat for the life of the agreement.

NRCS and the participant enter into a cost-share agreement for wildlife habitat development. This agreement generally lasts a minimum of 10 years from the date the contract is signed. Under the agreement:

- The landowner agrees to maintain the cost-shared practices and allow NRCS or its agent access to monitor its effectiveness.

- NRCS agrees to provide technical assistance and pay up to 75 percent of the cost of installing the wildlife habitat practices. Additional financial or technical assistance may be available through cooperating farmers.

Applications will be ranked according to a state-developed plan, and those that provide the greatest wildlife benefits will be funded. The goal is to provide the best habitat possible for the species of fish and wildlife which the landowner or land steward is trying to protect. Cost-share payments may be used to establish, maintain, or replace practices.

The budget for WHIP is authorized at a total of \$50 million from 1997-2002. Funds are allocated to states based on wildlife conservation priorities which will vary by state, and may include: special pilot programs for wildlife habitat development, targeted species and their habitats, specific practices, and cooperative agreements with other federal, state, or local agencies, conservation districts, or private conservation groups.

Eligibility

To participate in WHIP, applicants must own or have control of the land under consideration. Applications may be accepted from individuals, groups, or businesses.

Land is not eligible for WHIP if it is currently: 1) federal land (though exceptions can apply); 2) land currently enrolled in Waterbank, Emergency Watershed Program floodplain easements, Conservation Reserve Program, Wetlands Reserve Program, or other similar programs; 3) land where the

expected impact from off-site conditions make the success of habitat improvement unlikely.

WHIP funds cannot be used for mitigation of any kind or on any land designated as a converted wetland. Such land can be included in a WHIP cost-share agreement, however cost-share funds cannot be expended on those acres.

Uses and Restrictions

Applicants would develop a wildlife development habitat plan for the land with assistance from the local conservation district and the USDA. Participants are encouraged to select native plants and native plant communities because these are well adapted to the area and, less invasive, and likely to provide quality habitat without costly maintenance expenses.

WHIP funds are to be directed to support state wildlife habitat priorities which may include: wildlife habitat areas; targeted species and their habitats; specific practices; and cooperative agreements with other federal, state, or local agencies, conservation districts, or private conservation groups. State priorities are developed in consultation with the State Technical Committee.

Contact

For additional information on WHIP, contact the NRCS, FSA, the Cooperative Extension Service, or your local conservation district. Your local USDA Service Center is listed in the telephone book under U.S. Department of Agriculture.

National Program Office

Jeanne Christie
Program Manager
Watersheds and Wetlands Division
Natural Resources Conservation Service
202-720-3534

VI. Community Development

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)

Offers Grants to Agencies and Organizations in a 13-State Area for Projects that Promote Economic and Social Development

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) was established by Congress in 1965 to support economic and social development in the Appalachian Region. Each year, Congress appropriates funds, which ARC distributes among its member states. The Appalachian governors submit to ARC their priorities and spending plans for the year, which include lists of projects they recommend for funding. The spending plans are reviewed and approved at a meeting of the 14 Commission members, the governors of the 13 Appalachian states and a federal co-chairman. Citizens participate as members of local development districts and multi-county agencies with boards made up of elected officials, businesspeople and members of organizations.

ARC funds programs in two major categories: highways and development. The highway program provides Appalachia with a modern system of four-lane highways, the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) with access roads linking the system to industrial and commercial sites.

Area development funds are used primarily for projects in education, water and sewer systems, and health care. However, each state is free to establish its own priorities for the use of ARC development funds, so agriculture and forest projects must be on your state's agenda in order to warrant support with ARC funds.

Among the projects funded in the past by ARC is the distressed counties program, which provides special funding for the region's poorest areas and the local development district (LDD) program, which funds administrative support for the region's 69 local development districts. Special regional initiatives have also been initiated to help Appalachia respond to new economic development opportunities. Another opportunity is the J-1 visa program which enables health-care professionals from foreign countries to work in health manpower shortage areas in Appalachia.

In addition to program grants of the types described above, each year the ARC awards grants for research on topics that directly impact economic development in the Appalachian region. A prospectus of proposed research topics is published annually. Print copies may be obtained by contacting the Appalachian Regional Commission's Division of Regional Planning and Research at 1666 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20235, or at 202-884-7771.

Project Examples

Examples of projects funded under this initiative in FY 1996 include the following:

- Rural Johnson County High School in Tennessee received ARC and corporate grants to create an Aquacenter in the school's Alternative Farming Center. The \$500,000 grant is an attempt to find an alternative to tobacco as a major cash crop for young producers in the region. Students will learn to raise tilapia, striped bass, and crappie along with lettuce, tomatoes, and other produce in the school's greenhouse as part of the district's vocational education program.
- ARC granted \$200,000 to Pennsylvania's Hardwood Development Council, a 21-member board dedicated to adding value to lumber

products and increasing jobs in the state's forest industry. The grant will pay for workshops to help wood manufacturers: 1) identify new markets for wood products; 2) pay for a market analysis of the state's hardwood industry; 3) analyze skills required for secondary processing jobs and the state's ability to provide training for those jobs; and 4) develop a comprehensive listing of existing logger training programs.

- An ARC grant to the Kentucky International Trade Office was aimed at supporting a program to help small and medium-sized businesses conduct international trade. The goal of the program is to ensure that businesses have the information they need to take advantage of trade

opportunities. Assistance will include workshops, seminars, training, market identification and research, financing assistance, and development of industry consortia.

Eligibility

ARC program funds may be used only for projects to be carried out within the 399 counties in the 13 states designated by Congress as part of the Appalachian Region. The Appalachian Region encompasses 200,000-square-miles along the spine of the Appalachian Mountains from southern New York to northern Mississippi. The region includes all of West Virginia and parts of twelve other states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

In the past, regional development commissions existed in other regions of the U.S., but ARC is the only commission of its kind remaining.

All grant requests must originate from the states and be approved initially by a state's governor. ARC program grants can be awarded to state or local agencies and governmental bodies (such as economic development authorities), local governing boards (such as county councils), and nonprofit organizations (such as schools or non-governmental organizations). Program grants are not made to individuals or to private, for-profit corporations.

Uses and Restrictions

Because states originate all ARC program grants, a potential applicant must apply to the program manager in his or her state. Potential applicants should also contact the local development district serving his or her county for guidance on a project's eligibility for funding and for assistance in preparing a grant application.

ARC grants projects must address the following five major goals: 1) Developing a knowledgeable and skilled population; 2) Strengthening the Region's physical infrastructure; 3) Building local and regional capacity ; 4) Creating a dynamic economic base; and 5. Fostering healthy people. Historically much of ARC funding has supported projects in education and workforce training, highway construction, water and sewer system construction, leadership development programs, small business start-ups and expansions, and development of health-care resources.

Although projects aimed at agriculture and forest

production have been funded by the ARC, such projects represent a very small proportion of those supported over the years. A majority of the funding is dedicated to providing basic infrastructure for isolated rural communities and settlements.

The following projects are ineligible in both the area development program and the distressed counties program: any activity (construction or otherwise) in connection with libraries, cultural centers, or day-use recreational facilities; construction of schools, hospitals, or governmental office buildings; construction of community centers or social service facilities.

Contact

To initiate the application process you should contact the ARC program manager in your state. You should also approach the local development district serving your county for guidance on your project's eligibility for funding.

National Program Office

Judy Rae, Director
Program Operations Division
Appalachian Regional Commission
1666 Connecticut Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20235
202-884-7750

Internet

<http://www.arc.gov/>

Community Facilities Loan Program

Financial Assistance for Community Facilities in Rural Areas in the Form of Low-Interest Direct and Guaranteed Loans

The Community Facilities Loan Program provides below-market interest rate direct and guaranteed loans for the development, construction, enlargement, improvement, and operation of essential community facilities for public use in rural areas. Examples that relate to agriculture are: county fairgrounds, food preparation centers, agriculture land for research centers, slaughter houses, sprinkler systems, etc.

Direct and guaranteed loans are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, special-purpose districts, Indian tribes, and nonprofit corporations. The guaranteed loans work similarly to the Business and Industrial (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program of the Rural Business Service/Rural Development. The Rural Housing Service (RHS) guarantees loans by local banks and other commercial lenders against a portion (up to a maximum of 90 percent) of loss resulting from borrower default.

Project Examples

- The renovation of an existing agriculture fairground facility was funded in Minnesota with for showing livestock and grain, training in new farming and homemaking techniques, meeting other farm families, and enjoy family-oriented entertainment.
- The construction of a conference/training center with lodging facilities was funded in West Virginia with a direct loan of \$2.5 million. This facility is used by Future Farmers of America and Future Homemakers of America for continuing education. This loan allowed for the offering of more modern guest rooms than were available, as well as providing more services more groups.
- A new agriculture fairground (40,000 square feet) was funded in Covington County, Alabama, with an initial direct loan of \$400,000 and a subsequent loan of \$100,000 for additional costs that were incurred after start of construction.
- The purchase of agriculture land for a research center was funded in Cottle County, Texas, for \$30,780.
- A sprinkler system was funded in Jefferson County, Ore., with a direct loan of \$120,000.

Application and Financial Information

The state or district office of USDA's Rural Development agency makes the loan directly to the applicant. The state office generally has loan approval

authority. Applications are available throughout the year and are accepted on an ongoing basis. Eligibility is determined within 60 days, and approval determinations are made by the end of that fiscal year. Pre-application reviews and advice also are available through state offices.

There is no designated maximum Community Funds Loan amount, although each state may set such limits based on their allocations. The maximum term on all loans is 40 years. However, the maximum term on all loans is 40 years. No repayment period will exceed any statutory limitation on the organization's borrowing authority nor the useful life of the improvement or the facility. All loans will be secured to adequately protect the interest of the government. Bonds or notes pledging taxes, assessments, or revenues will be accepted as security if they meet statutory requirements. A mortgage may be taken on real and personal property when state laws permit. Interest rates will be set periodically and will be based on current market yields for municipal obligations, except that some loans which involve the use of prime or unique farmland may require a slightly higher interest rate. Other loans may be made at a lower interest rate. Interest rates for direct loans for January through March 1998 ranged from a poverty rate of 4.5 percent to an intermediate rate of 4.78 percent to a market rate of 5.2 percent, depending on financial need.

Eligibility

Loans are available for public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special purpose

districts. Nonprofit corporations and Indian tribes may also receive loan assistance when adequate plans for loan repayment are made.

To be an eligible loan purpose under the Community Facilities Program, an essential community facility should meet all of the following criteria:

- Be a function customarily provided by a local unit of government.
- Be a public improvement needed for the orderly development of a rural community.
- Not include private affairs or commercial or business undertakings (except for a limited authority for industrial parks).
- Be the area of jurisdiction or operation for the public bodies eligible to receive assistance or a similar local rural service area of a nonprofit corporation owning and operating an essential community facility.
- A community may be a small city or town, county, or possibly multi-county body, depending on the type of essential community facility.

Uses and Restrictions

Community Facilities Loan Program funds may be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and public services, including community buildings, child care centers, courthouses, public maintenance buildings, libraries, schools, industrial parks, roads, bridges, airports, fairgrounds, utilities, and other improvements or to acquire interest in land, leases, and right of ways necessary to develop the facilities. Loan funds may also be used for the operation of these facilities. Funds may also be used for multiservice centers and to pay necessary costs connected with these facilities. The project must be based on taxes, assessments, revenues, fees, or other satisfactory sources of money sufficient for operation, maintenance, and reserve, as well as retire the debt. The project also must be consistent with available comprehensive and other development plans for the community, and comply with federal, state, and local laws.

Contact

The 47 state offices for USDA's Rural Development (formerly the Farmers Home Administration) deliver the Community Facilities Loan Program (along with other business and community programs) to potential borrowers and lenders. For more information and applications, contact your state USDA Rural Development office or any Rural

Development field office. These offices can also provide contact information for local banks and lending institutions that have experience with the program. Applications are not available through the national program office, but inquiries are welcome.

National Program Office

Chief of Direct Loan Processing
Rural Housing Service
1400 Independence Ave.
Stop 3222
Washington DC, 20250-0730
202-720-1497
Email: calsop@rurdev.usda.gov

Internet

www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rhs/cf/cf.htm

Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program

Grants to Develop Community Food Projects for Low-Income Residents

This new program supports the development of community food projects designed to meet the food needs of low-income people; increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for their own needs; and promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues.

Other objectives of the program are to: 1) develop linkages between two or more sectors of the food system; 2) support the development of entrepreneurial projects; 3) develop innovative linkages between the for-profit and nonprofit food sectors; and 4) encourage long-term planning activities and multi-system, inter-agency collaboration.

A match of 50 percent non-federal support of the project is required during the term of the grant. The non-federal share may be provided through payment in cash or in-kind contributions in the form of fairly evaluated facilities, equipment, or services. The non-federal share may be derived from state or local governments, or from private sources.

Project Examples

Among the projects funded in 1996 were:

- The Community Alliance with Family Farm Foundation in California received a grant to connect small farmers with low-income communities. Family farmers and Latino community development groups work together so that low-income community residents have access to nutritious, locally-produced foods, and local farmers have outlets for marketing their produce.
- The Economics Micro-Enterprise Development Initiative in New Orleans, Louisiana is stimulating value-added production while linking rural producers and urban, low-income entrepreneurs. Rural growers sell their local produce to urban, low-income residents who then produce prepared foods which are sold at the local farmers' market. Fresh spinach pasta and peanut butter are among the goods produced with locally-grown produce and sold at the market.
- The Institute for Washington's Future in Seattle, Washington has created special partnerships to help keep local farmable lands in agriculture. Low-income area residents are trained in organic farming and small business, are given access to farmable land to grow crops, and market their produce locally.

Legislative Authority

Section 401 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996

Application and Financial Information

Each year the Community Food Projects program guidelines are published in the Federal Register. The program also maintains a mailing list of people who receive a copy of the Request for Proposals when it is available each year. You may ask to be placed on this mailing list by calling (202) 401-5048 or sending an e-mail message to: psu@reeusda.gov

All proposal guidelines and submission deadlines are outlined in the Request for Proposals. Formal proposals are submitted to the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) of USDA. Grant awards are announced within 90 to 180 days from the deadline for submission of proposals.

Proposals are reviewed by CSREES staff members with the assistance and advice of peer panels of specialists and are evaluated on the basis of multiple criteria including: 1) the ability of the proposed project to facilitate low-income people in the proposed community to provide for their own food needs; 2) the ability to promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition needs; 3) the capacity for the project to become self-sus-

taining once federal funding ends; 4) the organizational and staff qualifications and experience of the sponsoring organization; and 5) the extent to which the proposed project contributes to: a) developing linkages between two or more sectors of the food system; b) supporting the development of entrepreneurial projects; c) developing innovative linkages between the for-profit and nonprofit food sectors; d) encouraging long-term planning activities and multi-system, interagency approaches; and e) incorporating linkages to one or more ongoing USDA themes or initiatives referred to in the program guidelines and/or annual proposal solicitation.

Proposals must also indicate that projects have the 50-percent match from non-federal sources which is required for this program.

Projects may be funded for one to three years. Past grants have ranged from \$10,000 to \$250,000. No information on average amounts of grants is available.

In fiscal year 1996, the Community Food Project Competitive Grants Program received \$1 million for start-up. The next two years have been funded at \$2.5 million.

Eligibility

Proposals may be submitted by private nonprofit entities for projects which benefit low-income people. Because projects must promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues, applicants are encouraged to seek and create partnership among public, private nonprofit and private for-profit organizations or firms.

To be further eligible for a grant, a private nonprofit applicant must meet three mandatory requirements: 1) Have experience in the area of: a) community food work, particularly concerning small and medium-sized farms, including the provision of food to people in low-income communities and the development of new markets in low-income communities for agricultural producers; or b) job training and business development activities in low-income communities; 2) Demonstrate competency to implement a project, provide fiscal accountability and oversight, collect data, and prepare reports and other appropriate documentation; and 3) Demonstrate a willingness to share information with researchers, practitioners, and other interested parties.

Uses and Restrictions

Community food projects are intended to take a comprehensive approach to developing long-term solutions that help to ensure food security in communities by linking the food sector to community development, economic opportunity, and environmental enhancement. Comprehensive solutions may include elements such as: 1) Improved access to high quality, affordable food among low-income households; 2) Support for local food systems, from urban gardening to local farms that provide high quality fresh food, ideally with minimal adverse environmental impact; and 3) Expanded economic opportunities for community residents through local business or other economic development, improved employment opportunities, job training, youth apprenticeship, school-to-work transition, and the like. Any solution proposed must address community food needs.

Contact

National Program Office

Dr. Mark R. Bailey, 202-401-1898

and

Dr. Elizabeth Tuckerman, 202-205-0241

Program Co-Directors

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, Department of Agriculture

Stop 2201

Washington, DC 20250-2201

Internet

<http://www.reeusda.gov>

Select "Funding Opportunities," and then "All Funding Opportunities," then select this program.

The Forest Service's Economic Recovery Program

Provides Technical and Financial Assistance, Training and Education Assistance to Communities Dependent on Forest Resources to Diversify their Economies

The Forest Service's Economic Recovery program provides technical and financial assistance, training, and education to communities faced with acute economic problems associated with federal or private sector resource management decisions and policies. Aid is targeted to communities that are located in or near a national forest and are economically dependent upon forest resources (including timber, forage, recreation, tourism and mining). Economic Recovery is intended to help communities develop strategic action plans to diversify their economic base and to improve the economic, social, and environmental well being of rural areas. Specific actions focus on organizing, planning, and implementing natural resource-based projects contained in local action plans. Funds can also be used for seed money, feasibility studies and business plan development.

Economic Recovery is a program component of Rural Community Assistance (RCA), a core Forest Service effort since 1990. RCA, which includes Economic Recovery and Rural Development, is a broad-based effort aimed at helping communities capitalize on their potential to diversify and expand their economies through the use of natural resources, emphasize working through partnerships while developing long-term sustainable solutions to problems through local, community-based planning.

Project Examples

Since the initiation of the Economic Recovery Program, direct assistance has grown from helping 185 eligible communities in fiscal year 1992 to over 1500 in fiscal year 1996. Many of the local action plans include activities related to tourism, expanding or creating businesses, marketing, special forest products, or building community capacity through organizational development and training/education projects.

- Developing and implementing an ecosystem management plan which includes commercial opportunities for utilizing small diameter, second-growth pine in Montezuma, Dolores, and La Plata counties in southwestern Colorado.
- Establishment of the Forest Technology and Training Institute in Clallum County, Washington which teaches cutting edge forest technology to local loggers and businesses.
- Increasing awareness and development of non-farm industries in the historically agriculturally based area around Rust College, Mississippi, with a special emphasis on recreation and tourism opportunities as well as value-added forest products.

- Establishing a farmers' market in the city of Palmer, Alaska, which combines marketing and community recreation areas.
- Training and placing out-of-work loggers into environmental restoration jobs within a Ceremonial District of the Karuk Tribe near the communities of Somes Bar and Orleans, California.
- Strategic planning resulting in the renovation of the historic Rose Hotel and the development of a flurospar museum in Hardin County, Illinois.

Legislative Authority

National Forest Dependent Rural Communities Economic Diversification Act of 1990, sec. 2371 Subtitle G, Chapter 2, Title XXIII, Public Law 101-624, 7U.S.C. 6611, as amended

Application and Financial Information

Assistance is available from the National Forest Supervisor's offices and field offices of the Northeastern Area of the State and Private Forestry branch of

the Forest Service to aid in the preparation of applications. Communities are requested to submit form SF-424(A) with the SF-424 application and other required forms as advised by the local Forest Service office. Funding decisions are based on community and regional priorities and are made in consultation with other state and local agencies and organizations.

Grants range from \$5,000 to \$30,000. The federal contribution to the overall implementation of an action plan cannot exceed 80 percent of the total cost of the plan, including administrative and other costs. In fiscal year 1997, \$5 million was available for financial and technical assistance.

Eligibility

Applicant must be a general purpose local government or area represented by a nonprofit corporation or institution under state or federal law to promote broad based economic development having a population of not more than 10,000; or any county that is not contained within a metropolitan statistical area. In both cases, the county must derive 15 percent or greater primary and secondary labor and proprietary income from forestry and forest related industries, such as recreation and tourism, range, minerals, and wildlife. In all cases, the community or county must also be within 100 miles of the boundary of a national forest. Communities or counties associated solely with national grasslands are not eligible.

Uses and Restrictions

Eligible economically disadvantaged rural communities may request assistance in identifying opportunities that will promote economic improvement, diversification and revitalization. Assistance is coordinated through a community action team and plan. Programs may include upgrade of existing industries, development of new economic activity in non-forest related industries, technical assistance, training and education directed towards meeting the community's planned goals. Assistance requested will be coordinated with other USDA agencies and targeted to provide immediate help to those rural communities in greatest need.

Contact

Northeastern Area-State & Private Forestry (CT, DE, IA, IL, IN, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT, WI, WV)
304-285-1538

Northern Region (MT, Northern ID, ND, Northwest SD)
406-329-3230

Rocky Mountain Region (CO, KS, Northeast SD, Eastern WY)
(303) 275-5741

Southwestern Region (AZ, NM)
(505) 438-7840

Intermountain Region (Southern ID, NV, UT, Western WY)
801-625-5259

Pacific Southwest Region (CA, HI, Guam)
415-705-2678

Pacific Northwest Region
503-326-6212

Southern Region (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, PR, SC, TN, TX, VA)
404-347-7486

Alaska Region
907-271-2519

Int'l Institute of Tropical Forestry (Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands)
787-766-5335

National Program Office
Director, Cooperative Forestry
State and Private Forestry
Forest Service, USDA
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090
202-205-1657

Internet

willow.ncfes.umn.edu/coop/eap.htm

Environmental Justice Community/ University Partnership Grants Program

Competitive Grants to Encourage Collaboration between Community Organizations and Institutions of Higher Learning Addressing Environmental Justice

The Office of Environmental Justice's (OEJ) of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established the Community/University Partnership (CUP) Grants Program to assist community groups in their efforts to address local health and environmental justice issues through active partnerships with institutions of higher education. CUP emphasizes meaningful, fully interactive two-way cooperation between communities or Tribal Governments and institutions of higher education to address a community's or tribe's priority environmental justice concerns (e.g. identification of pollution sources, training on rights and responsibilities) and help solve specific environmental problems.

Through these partnerships, communities will be encouraged to become involved in accessing information from environmental databases, in cleaning-up and restoring environmental quality in communities that have environmental insults, and in surveying and monitoring environmental quality.

Project Examples

- The University of Arizona and the Reservation Environmental Assessment Project are collaborating on environmental justice issues on the Camp Verde and Colorado River reservations. The project involves educational outreach to help residents address problems with incidental pesticides in soils, surface water, and foods as well as lead in paint, drinking water, and soils.
- The Haskell Indian Nations University in Kansas, the Prairie Band Potawatomi Tribe and the Kickapoo Tribe received a \$220,320 grant to assess the sources and extent of water contamination systems, interpreting data and environmental risks, and helping community members and government representatives to come together to resolve environmental justice problems.

Information Available

No grants will be made in 1998. Congress failed to appropriate funds for the program. However, application information for subsequent years can be requested by calling the Environmental Justice Hotline at 1-800-962-6215.

Application and Financial Information

Notice of the Request for Proposals is published in the Federal Register in November or December. Deadline for submission of proposals to the national

office is generally in March. Proposals are ranked on a 100-point scale, and those receiving a ranking greater than 80 points are usually recommended for funding.

For fiscal year 1995, seven awards were made for up to \$300,000 each from a pool of 54 applications. For FY 1996, out of the 102 applications received, nine awards were made for up to \$250,000.

The project period can extend up to three years, if necessary, with funding dispersed to the grantee over the course of the project period.

Eligibility

Participation is limited to institutions of higher education, including Historically Black Colleges or Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges and institutions serving Asian-American and other minority communities, low-income communities or tribes that have formal partnerships (i.e. a signed Memorandum of Agreement) with any affected party which is eligible under applicable statutory authorities (i.e. community-based/grassroots organizations, churches, schools or other nonprofit community organizations, etc.) and tribal governments. Preference is given to university or community groups who have not previously been CUP grantees.

CUP partnerships may be either among two single

entities or a consortium of entities. If a consortium is proposed, the lead academic institution must be identified as one of the eligible applicants. This lead institution is recognized as the grantee and as such is responsible for all activities under the agreement.

Uses and Restrictions

The universities/colleges shall support affected environmental justice community groups and American Indian tribes who engage in or plan to carry out projects that address environmental justice issues. Universities/colleges that focus on the design, methods, and techniques to evaluate and solve the environmental justice concerns of affected communities, in actual partnership with these communities, will be given priority.

Partnerships must be established with formal agreements (i.e. Memorandum of Agreements) between at least one college/university and at least one socio-economically disadvantaged community or tribe which is adversely impacted by an environmental hazard and public health concerns. These partnerships become the catalyst for increasing environmental awareness and involvement in resolving environmental problems, such as exposure to environmental pollutants in minority and low-income communities and on tribal lands.

Contact

National Program Office
Mustafa Ali
Program Manager
401 M St., SW
Mail Code 2201A
Washington, D.C. 20460
1-800-962-6215

Internet

<http://es.inel.gov/oeca/oej/97grants.html>

Environmental Justice Small Grants Program

Grants up to \$20,000 to Assist Community-Based Organizations that Sponsor or Execute Projects to Address Local Environmental Justice Issues

The Environmental Justice Program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides financial assistance to grassroots community-based groups to support projects to design, demonstrate or disseminate practices, methods or techniques related to environmental justice. Specifically, EPA will grant up to \$20,000 in funding assistance for projects.

EPA identifies the following factors as particularly important in evaluating proposals: (1) The applicant's ability to manage the grant in compliance with EPA grant regulations; (2) The degree to which the health and economic well-being of the environment are adversely affected by environmental hazardous exposure; (3) The applicant's ability to inform others in the community of the information gathered; (4) Broad representation of affected groups and individuals in the community; and (5) The applicant group is incorporated. In general, the applicant must show awareness of the time commitment, resources and dedication needed to successfully manage a grant.

Project Examples

- The Comite de Apoyo a los Trabajadores Agricolas in New Jersey received a grant of \$20,000 to work with the community-at-large and local farmworkers to remedy the contamination of water in southern New Jersey, particularly the coliform contamination in migrant labor camps and the general nitrate contamination resulting from agricultural practices. This project will work through outreach and education of farmworkers and community members, working with grassroots organizations and health clinics that serve the migrant worker population.
- A grant of \$15,000 was awarded to Healing Our Mother Earth in California to hold a series of meetings to train primarily Spanish-speaking, low-income farmworkers to recognize symptoms of chemical poisoning and to encourage families to seek regular preventative medical check-ups to be screened for various health problems. The project will also provide education on how families can avoid or minimize exposure to dangerous toxins.
- North Carolina Fair Share Education received \$20,000 to develop community awareness and leadership training among community members in order to address the contamination of ground-water supplies resulting from dumping by corporate hog industries. The group will carry out education, training, monitoring, and survey-

ing in the area to enhance critical thinking, problem-solving, and active participation among the predominantly rural, African-American, and low-to-moderate income residents.

The majority of the awards granted in 1996 served urban populations. However, there is no particular preference for funding projects in metropolitan areas.

Application and Financial Information

The solicitation outlining the grant guidelines for each year is published in the Federal Register in mid-December. In addition, the national and regional program offices maintain mailing lists of organizations and individuals who receive the grant guidelines each December when published. You can contact one of these offices (see "Contact" below) to be placed on one of these lists.

Potential applicants are invited to submit a pre-proposal to their regional Environmental Justice Office (see listing of regional offices below). Applications should describe the planned program, the means for executing the program, and preliminary budget information. The deadline for submitting pre-proposals is generally around March 1.

Notification of awards is in August or September. Applicants selected for award may be requested to furnish additional information.

The project grant may be requested for one year. Activities must be completed within the time frame of the project's budget period.

For FY 1996, the total program budget was \$3 million. For 1997, the budget was cut to \$2.5 million. Most grants are for about \$20,000.

Eligibility

Community-based grassroots organizations, other incorporated nonprofit organizations and federally recognized Tribal Governments are eligible. Individuals may have their organizations, institutions, government or association apply. Nonprofit organizations must be incorporated to receive funds.

Uses and Restrictions

Grant funds shall be used to support projects, programs or activities that promote environmental justice. Projects may include: 1) design, demonstration, or dissemination of environmental justice curricula, including development of education tools and materials; 2) design and demonstration of field methods, practices, and techniques, including assessment of environmental and ecological conditions and analysis of environmental and public health problems; 3) identification, assessment or improvement of a specific local environmental justice issue or a specific environmental problem; 4) provision of environmental justice training or related education for teachers, faculty, or related personnel in a specific geographic area or region.

Priority will be given to community-based/grassroots organizations, tribes, and organizations whose projects will help improve the environmental quality of affected communities by a) developing an environmental justice project, activity, method, or technique that has wide application; b) enhancing the community's skills in addressing environmental justice issues and problems; and c) establishing or expanding environmental and public health information systems for local communities.

Funds cannot be used to acquire real property (including buildings) or construct or substantially modify any building. Funds also cannot be used for lobbying or underwriting legal actions.

Contact

The Office of Environmental Justice's 24-hour hotline is (1-800-962-6215). Select the "small grants" option from the hotline's menu.

Region 1 (ME, VT, NH, MA, CN, RI)

Rhona Julien
617-565-9454

Region 2 (NY, NJ, PR, VI)

Melva Hayden
212-637-5027

Region 3 (MD, DE, WV, VA, PA, DC)

Reginald Harris
215-566-2988

Region 4 (AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN)

Vivian Malone-Jones
404-562-9671

Region 5 (IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)

Karla Johnson
312-886-5993

Region 6 (AR, LA, NM, OK, TX)

Shirley Augurson
214-665-7401

Region 7 (IA, KS, MO, NB)

Althea Moses
913-551-7649

Region 8 (CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY)

Elisabeth Evans
303-312-6053

Region 9 (CA, AZ, HI, NV, GM, A.S.)

Willard Chin
415-744-1204

Region 10 (AK, ID, OR, WA)

Joyce Crossen-Kelly
206-553-4029

Headquarters Office

Mary Settle, Small Grants Program Manager
Office of Environmental Justice (3103)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
401 M Street SW, Washington, DC 20460
202-564-2594

Internet

<http://www.epa.gov/oeca/oejbut.html>

Environmental Justice Through Pollution Prevention Grant Funds (EJP2)

Grants to Support Approaches to Pollution Prevention that Address the Environmental Problems of Minority and/or Low-Income Communities

EJP2, a program of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is designed to support pollution prevention approaches that address environmental justice concerns in affected communities. Grants support: (1) local environmental, environmental justice, community grassroots organizations, as well as tribal governments that promote environmental justice using pollution prevention as the preferred approach; and (2) national and regional organizations who will, in partnership with local environmental, environmental justice, community grassroots organizations, as well as tribal governments, promote environmental justice using pollution prevention as the preferred approach.

Environmental justice is defined by EPA as the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, programs, and policies. Fair treatment means that no racial, ethnic, or socio-economic group should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from the operation of industrial, municipal, and commercial enterprises, and from the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies.

Pollution prevention means source reduction, that is, any practice that reduces or eliminates any pollutant at the source of generation prior to recycling, treatment, or disposal. Pollution prevention also includes practices that reduce or eliminate the creation of pollutants through: increased efficiency in the use of raw materials, energy, water, or other resources; and protection of natural resources by conservation. EJP2 is focused on using the top of the hierarchy—pollution prevention—to bring about better environmental protection.

Project Examples

- The National Center for Appropriate Technology received a grant of \$236,442 to help Hispanic-American farmers and rural communities in the Texas Panhandle who often suffer from disproportionate exposure to pesticides. Farm demonstrations, workshops, and farmer-to-farmer exchanges in Spanish and English will be used to increase access to and use of practical technical information on integrated pest management and other sustainable agriculture practices.
- The Nebraska IMPACT project, a collaboration among farmers, community members, and agricultural institutions, received a grant of \$25,000 to: monitor environmentally-sound farm production practices, conduct educational programs, publicize group activities and to encourage collaboration among Nebraska's farmers/ranchers, agriculture institutions, technical advisors, and community members in providing support for environmentally-sound farming practices.
- Denver Urban Gardens (DUG), a nonprofit organization, received \$25,000 to assist their efforts to make available to low- and moderate-income persons the opportunity to grow their own food in 49 community gardens and small parks in the Denver area. Funds were to assist in coordinating a community effort to identify and clean up polluted parcels of land and to turn the land into 10 community garden demonstration projects.

Information Available

A complete electronic copy of the EJP2 grant program guidance and application package is available on the EPA homepage on the Internet (see "Contact" below.)

Application and Financial Information

For the 1996 competition, organizations seeking

funds from the EJP2 grant program could request up to \$100,000 for local projects, and up to \$250,000 for projects that are national in scope, involving multiple communities located in more than one EPA Region. One grant was awarded in each of the 10 EPA regions, and one grant was funded for a project with a national audience.

In 1995, several small grants were awarded in each region ranging from \$70-250,000.

Each year the Solicitation Notice, which appears in the Federal Register in January, will provide application guidelines and information regarding the size of grants available for that year. The deadline for proposal submission is generally in April, and notification of awards is generally made in August.

Eligibility

Nonprofit community organizations or state and federally recognized tribal organizations may submit applications.

Excluded from the competition are nonprofit organizations which engage in lobbying activities, private businesses, federal agencies, and individuals. However, the EPA encourages those organizations which are excluded from applying directly, as well as those inexperienced in grant-writing, to develop partnerships and prepare joint proposals with national, regional, or local organizations.

Uses and Restrictions

Funds awarded must be used to support pollution prevention programs which have a direct impact on minority and/or low-income communities. The EPA strongly encourages cooperative efforts between communities, business, industry, and government to address common pollution prevention goals. Projects funded under this grant may involve public education, training, demonstration projects, public/private partnerships, or approaches to develop, evaluate, and demonstrate non-regulatory strategies and technologies.

EJP2 provides examples of possible future grant activities on their Web site (see below). The examples are not intended to serve as a comprehensive list of possible grant projects; rather, they illustrate activities that use pollution prevention principles in addressing environmental justice problems that exist in the communities. Among the ideas for agriculture-related projects which EPA suggests that applicants consider are:

- Research, demonstration projects, or public educational training activities to institutionalize sustainable agricultural practices with the aim of reducing the use of pesticides.

- A cooperative training program for both migrant farm workers and farm owners on "integrated farm management" techniques, reduced use of pesticides, or substitution of less environmentally damaging pesticides.

Contact

National Program Office

Program Manager

Environmental Justice Through Pollution

Prevention Grant Funds

Pollution Prevention Division

US-EPA 7409

Washington, D.C. 20460

EJP2 Grants Information (202) 260-3557

Internet

<http://www.epa.gov/opptintr/ejp2>

The Forest Service's Rural Development Program

Grants for Community Capacity Building, Forest-Based Economic Development and Forest Resource Conservation-Based Technology Demonstration or Application

The Forest Service's Rural Development program provides grants for technical assistance and matching funds for locally initiated and planned projects designed to stimulate improvements in the economic or social well-being of rural citizens through forest resources. Assistance is targeted to help strengthen, diversify and expand local economies experiencing long-term or persistent economic problems. Communities need not be dependent on Federal lands or forests to be eligible.

Rural Development is a program component of Rural Community Assistance (RCA), a core Forest Service effort since 1990. RCA, which includes Economic Recovery and Rural Development, is a broad-based effort aimed at helping communities capitalize on their potential to diversify and expand their economies through the use of natural resources, emphasize working through partnerships while developing long-term sustainable solutions to problems through local, community-based planning.

Project Examples

- Assisted Balsam Bough Industries, a coalition of cutters, buyers, and wreath manufacturers to organize itself, design and produce a brochure on rights of way, and coordinate round table discussions and workshops among tribal, state, county, federal and private interests. Balsam Bough manages a sustainable resource and provides seasonal income for thousands of rural residents.
- Assisted Woodcraft Network of Sedro Woolley, WA to organize itself and leverage several other sponsors. This successful network holds workshops, provides technical and business assistance to members, hosts or participates in retail and trade shows and serves as a network coordinator for small woodworking firms.
- Helped to organize the Menominee Nation Tribal Enterprises (MTE), an award-winning forest-based business which thrives by producing what the forest has available at the right time, rather than just what the current market is demanding. MTE uses a strategic planning process that enables people to take control of their own lives and write their own plans, and helps focus business activities on sustaining the forest resource over the long term.

Legislative Authority

Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978, as

amended.

Application and Financial Information

Assistance is available from the National Forest Supervisor's Offices and field offices of the Northeastern Area of the State and Private Forestry branch of the Forest Service, and the State Foresters' staffs to aid in the preparation of applications. Funding decisions are based on community and regional priorities and are made in consultation with other state and local agencies and organizations. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$40,000. In fiscal year 1997, \$5.5 million was available for financial and technical assistance.

Eligibility

Communities, state agencies, non-profits, educational institutions, businesses, and individuals are eligible to apply for financial assistance. Communities need not be dependent on federal lands or forests to be eligible.

Uses and Restrictions

Criteria for grants vary among states and National Forests but typically involve community capacity building, forest-based economic development, and forest resource conservation based technology demonstration or application.

Contact

For applications and information, contact the regional office of the Forest Service near you (see the contact list in the entry for Economic Recovery) or the state forester in your state's capital.

National Program Office

Director, Cooperative Forestry
Forest Service, USDA
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090
202-205-1657

Internet

willow.ncfes.umn.edu/coop/eap.htm

Resource Conservation and Development (RC& D)

Technical Assistance to Local Communities to Stimulate Economies and Natural Resources

The Resource Conservation and Development (RC& D) program provides technical assistance to local communities (multi-county areas known as "RC&D areas") to improve their economies, natural resources, and living standards by coordinating conservation and rural development assistance available from USDA, other federal, state, and local sources. Basic to RC&D is the idea that local people know what is best for their communities. That's why RC&D areas are led by Councils comprised of local volunteers. RC&D areas currently blanket over half of the counties in the U.S. Through the program, USDA provides technical assistance in the form of a local staff person (an "RC&D coordinator") to support each multi-county RC&D area. The RC&D Council identifies the environmental, economic, and social needs of their area and sets project priorities objectives, goals, and the resources needed in an area plan. The RC&D coordinator, supported by USDA, serves the Council by helping complete project designs and get projects underway by locating the necessary resources. Most RC&D Councils are nonprofit organizations. They have broad authority to seek help from sources that are the best qualified to provide needed assistance. This help may be technical assistance from USDA agencies, State or local governments, local conservation districts, or private industry. Or assistance may be financial assistance such as donations, loans, grants, or cost-sharing arrangements.

RC&D activities include:

- Finding uses for the natural resource base;
- Developing natural resource based industries;
- Protecting rural industries and people from natural resource hazards;
- Improving water quality and make more water available;
- Making the best use of local forest lands;
- Creating and expanding forest-related

industries;

- Improving opportunities for recreation and tourism;
- Educating people about natural resources;
- Contributing to local economic development;
- Creating and improving fish and wildlife habitat; and
- Developing and improving wetland habitat.

Project Examples

• To better manage their forest resources, the Columbia RC&D is bringing together private businesses with state and federal agencies to focus on the special forest products industry. The RC&D provides a market for and processes locally-gathered mushrooms and florist ornamentals. These agroforestry projects have been incorporated under the name of RainKiss. The RainKiss Corporation provides a market for special forest products as an alternative to traditional timber extraction. The Columbia RC&D also has formed the Hybrid Cottonwood Growers' Association, which is identifying diverse uses

for products from cottonwood forests. The RC&D's efforts to promote innovative forest based businesses have resulted in the employment of more than 65 displaced timber workers.

• *Direct Application of Recycled Paper on Cropland in Texas:* A partnership of the Big Country RC&D in Sweetwater, Texas, NRCS, EPA, USDA's Agricultural Research Service, National Soil Dynamics Laboratory and other national, state, and local partners are developing a process to utilize recycled paper to provide environmental benefits to production agriculture and create a new source of jobs in agricultural areas. The production of

pelletized recycled paper will provide an alternative to putting paper in sanitary landfills and address nonpoint source pollution, wind erosion, and improve productivity of cropland soils.

- *Wood Pellets to Heat Homes in Missouri:* To help create a new market for the timber business in the Ozarks and alleviate sawdust storage problems for local sawmills and wood products manufacturers, three Missouri RC&D areas (Top of the Ozarks, Big Springs, and Southwest Missouri RC&Ds) sponsored an incentive program for using wood pellets made from compressed sawdust to heat homes. This has helped exploit an under-utilized by-product, and has cut heating costs in many homes in the area. Wood pellets are a cleaner burning product, by creating less ash and smoke, and there is no creosote buildup. This was a cooperative effort of the Department of Energy, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, and the Tennessee Valley Authority's Southeast Regional Biomass Energy Program.

- *Composting Facility for Dead Poultry in North Carolina:* To protect the water quality and provide an inexpensive form of fertilizer for reuse on farms in North Carolina, the Region H RC&D area council built, operated, and evaluated a composting facility for dead poultry. The North Carolina Department of Agriculture Division of Veterinary Medicine, Horseshoe Farms, and several other organizations provided assistance in building and operating the facility, obtaining permits, and evaluating the health aspects of the demonstration project. The Region H RC&D Area Council will be producing an educational video program to educate the public about the composting system and to encourage use of the system.

Eligibility

State and local governments and nonprofit organizations with authority to plan or carry out activities relating to resource use and development in multi-jurisdictional areas. This program also is available in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam and the Mariana Islands.

Contact

To find out about RC&D activities in your area, contact your local NRCS office. Check your telephone directory under U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture.

National Program Office

NRCS
RC&D Division
P.O. Box 2890, Room 6103-S
Washington, D.C. 20013-2890
202-720-2241; 202-690-4205 (fax)

Internet

www.ncg.nrcs.usda.gov/rcnd_2.html

Legislative Authority

Section 1528-1538 of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981.

Application and Financial Information

Written applications must be in the form suggested in the National Resource Conservation and Development Manual. Details of the procedure are available from State and field offices of NRCS. Authorization of applications is dependent upon the level of appropriations for the program. Funding available for RC&D areas in fiscal year 1997 is \$34.4 million.

Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants (REDLG)

Provides Zero-Interest Loans and Grants to Rural Electric and Telephone Utilities to Promote Economic Development and Job Creation

The Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants (REDLG) program makes direct zero-interest loans and grants to Rural Utilities Service (RUS) electric and telecommunication utilities who use the funds to provide financing for business and community development projects. Zero-interest loans are provided to finance a broad array of projects, including for-profit businesses. Grants are provided to the RUS utility to establish a revolving loan fund which will finance such purposes as community development assistance, education and training for economic development, medical care, telecommunications for education, job training or medical services, business incubators, and technical assistance. REDLG program funds can be used for value-added projects and businesses.

Project Examples

- A \$100,000 REDLG loan was made in North Dakota for the construction of pasta plant to process durum wheat produced by local growers.
- Another \$100,000 REDLG loan was made in North Dakota for the construction of a bison slaughter/processing plant for a bison ranchers cooperative.

Legislative Authority

Section 313 of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, as amended.

Application and Financial Information

The USDA state offices of Rural Development generally are delegated loan approval authority on a case-by-case basis. Pre-application reviews and advice are available through state offices. A maximum of \$400,000 per loan or grant application may be requested. Maturity for loans is a maximum of 10 years. Applications are scored on job creation potential, sustainability of projects, suitability to the area, diversification of employment in the area, amount of supplemental funds, relative income, and employment levels. The funding level for fiscal year 1996 for loans and grants was \$13 million and \$20 million, respectively.

Eligibility

Only RUS electric and telecommunication borrowers are eligible.

Uses and Restrictions

Loans are provided to finance a broad array of projects, including for-profit businesses. Grants are provided to establish revolving loan funds to finance purposes such as community development assistance, education and training for economic development, medical care, telecommunications for education, job training or medical services, business incubators, and technical assistance.

Contact

The 47 state offices for USDA's Rural Development Program (formerly the Farmers Home Administration) deliver the REDLG program (along with other business and community programs). For more information and applications, contact your state USDA Rural Development office or any Rural Development field office. Applications are not available through the national program office, but inquiries are welcome.

National Program Office

Joseph Binder, Program Manager
USDA, Rural Business-Cooperative Service
14th and Independence Ave, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250
202-720-1400
Email: jbinder@rus.usda.gov

Internet

www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rbcds/html/biloan.htm

Urban and Community Forestry

Technical and Financial Assistance for Tree Planting, Care and Protection, Including Recycling and Urban Tree Waste Utilization

Through the Urban and Community Forestry program the Forest Service provides leadership in the management of natural resources in urban and suburban areas to improve the quality of life and teach sound conservation principles that can be passed on to future generations. While the program has a broad focus, one of its objectives is facilitating the development of recycling and urban tree waste management and utilization technologies. This aspect of the program can help individuals and communities utilize residues from urban tree maintenance and removal in ways that create value-added business opportunities while conserving landfill space and solving other solid waste problems. By composting woody residues with food processing waste, for example, two components of the solid waste stream can be eliminated while creating valuable soil amendments and mulches.

Project Examples

This program:

- Assisted the organization and start-up of a composting station in Lindborg, Kan. This eliminated multiple sources of solid waste flow to the local landfill and extended its life into the next century.
- Cost-shared the development of a program of the N.J. state forester to assist communities in sorting urban logs and tree residues into marketable product lines and selling them to local forest products producers. Published "Recycling Street Tree Guide" that documents ways communities can set up such programs.

Legislative Authority

Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978, as amended

Application and Financial Information

Assistance is available through State Forestry organizations. Each state issues its own application procedures. Funds are limited by availability and existence of congressional- or Administration-identified priorities. The federal contribution cannot exceed 50 percent of the total project.

Eligibility

Cities, towns, municipalities, local governments, non-government organizations, non-profits, and environmental justice organizations are eligible.

Uses and Restrictions

Priority is given to projects that build local capacity and have the support and involvement of communities and volunteer groups. Ordinarily not more than 20 percent of the total funds can be used to purchase, plant, and maintain trees.

Contact

For applications and information, contact the Urban Forestry Coordinators in the regional offices of the Forest Service near you or the state forester in your state's capital.

Northeastern Area-State & Private Forestry (CT, DE, IA, IL, IN, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT, WI, WV)
603-868-7688

Northern Region (MT, Northern ID, ND, Northwest SD)
406-329-3521

Rocky Mountain Region (CO, KS, Northeast SD, Eastern WY)
303-275-5742

Southwestern Region (AZ, NM)
505-842-3424

Intermountain Region (Southern ID, NV, UT, Western WY)
801-625-5189

Pacific Southwest Region (CA, HI, Guam)
415-705-1274

Pacific Northwest Region (OR, WA)

503-326-5602

Southern Region (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS,
NC, OK, PR, SC, TN, TX, VA)

404-347-1647

Alaska Region

907-271-2550

International Institute of Tropical Forestry (Puerto
Rico, the Virgin Islands)

809-766-5335

National Program Office

National Program Manager

Urban and Community Forestry

USDA Forest Service

14th & Independence, SW

201 14th Street

Washington DC 20250

202-205-1612

Internet

willow.ncfes.umn.edu/coop/ucf.htm

VII. Additional Resources

Animal Damage Control (ADC)

Wild animals contribute to our enjoyment of nature and outdoor recreation, but they can also damage property, agriculture, and natural resources and threaten human health and safety. ADC responds to requests by the public and agencies in need of help in limiting wildlife damage. A Federal service program that shares costs with cooperators, ADC has the authority to assist in solving problems that are created when wildlife cause damage.

Most of ADC's efforts are conducted on private land in response to specific requests for assistance. After developing agreements with governmental and private-sector cooperators, ADC provides help to prevent or reduce wildlife damage through two approaches: technical assistance and direct control.

ADC acts as a protective buffer, guarding not only resources, but also wildlife and the environment when conflicts between humans and wildlife occur. When formulating control strategies, ADC specialists consider protected or endangered animals, environmental impacts, the cost effectiveness of control methods, and social and legal concerns. Control strategies may include the application of one or more techniques, and consideration is first given to nonlethal methods. ADC professionals provide biologically sound, effective, and accountable solutions to wildlife problems. In all instances, ADC programs are conducted to ensure no lasting negative impact on wildlife populations. ADC professionals strive to educate the public and producers about the importance of using responsible strategies for living with wildlife.

ADC helps to reduce damage caused by wildlife to crops and livestock, natural resources, public and private property, and public health and safety. ADC helps resolve bird hazards to aircraft; starling and blackbird contamination at feedlots; bird damage to aquaculture; urban starling and blackbird roosts; nuisance Canada geese; predation of waterfowl and livestock; beaver flooding roads and damaging timber; deer damaging orchards, crops, and ornamental landscaping; bear destroying timber and beehives; wildlife-borne diseases, such as rabies and plague; and wildlife threats to endangered species.

ADC professionals recommend and use an integrated wildlife damage management approach to reduce wildlife damage. This approach employs methods to prevent damage from occurring and to stop damage once it begins. All techniques used meet strict guidelines for safety, selectivity, and effectiveness. These methods may involve changing management practices, modifying habitat, dispersing animals, or removing wildlife. A combination of these approaches is generally used. ADC's National Wildlife Research Center improves techniques available to ADC and develops new methods for reducing animal damage.

Contact

For more information about the wildlife services of ADC, any State APHIS, ADC office may be contacted. For the address and telephone number in your area, call the ADC Operational Support staff at (301) 734-7921.

National Program Office

Mr. Bobby Acord, Deputy Administrator
Animal Damage Control
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Ag Box 3402
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20250
202-720-2054

Internet

www.aphis.usda.gov/adc/adchome.html

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)

This USDA program provides national leadership in ensuring the health and care of animals and plants, improving agricultural productivity and competitiveness, and contributing to the national economy and the public health. APHIS is dedicated to protecting the health of the nation's livestock and poultry and the nation's agricultural resources from harmful pests. It also protects livestock, field crops, and aquaculture (fish production) from depredation by predatory animals, birds, and field rodents. APHIS carries out this mission through the following programs: Animal Care; Animal Damage Control; Biotechnology, Biologic and Environmental Protection; International Services; National Biological Control Institute; Plant Protection and Quarantine; and Regulatory Enforcement.

APHIS provides farmers with technical assistance in pest/disease plant mange, ecology, environmental stewardship, and other farm issues. Through its swine health protection program APHIS helps to control erosion and animal waste contamination of waterways. The agency collaborates with many public organizations to enhance water quality.

Contact

Mary Harris Freeman
202-720-6318; 202-720-2365 (fax)

Internet

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/oa/aphishome.html>

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant (DLT) Program

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant (DLT) Program is intended to encourage, improve, and make affordable the use of telecommunications, computer networks and related technology for rural communities to improve access to educational and/or medical services. DLT provides grants and loans to rural schools and health care providers to invest in telecommunications facilities and equipment to bring educational and medical resources to rural areas that otherwise might be unavailable. The grant portion of the program was authorized under the 1990 Farm Bill, while the Loan portion was added under the 1996 Farm Bill. The new loan program is effective starting fiscal year 1997. DLT can be used to create opportunities for distance learning for farmers and entrepreneurs through colleges, universities, and other educational institutions whose courses might otherwise be inaccessible.

Distance learning situations include, but are not limited to:

- Linking rural schools within regions to share limiting teaching resources.
- Linking a rural school or a grouping of rural schools to institutions located in metropolitan or more populated centers.
- Utilizing rural libraries or other community facilities as distance learning centers, linking them with on-line resources or regional institutions.
- Utilizing job training centers, vocational schools, or other facilities incorporated by job training programs.

Eligibility is extended to those who operate rural educational or health care facilities, Indian tribes, consortiums or partnerships, and other incorporated organizations that operate educational or medical facilities in rural areas. DLT is an exclusively rural program.

Contact

Applications and further information will be available through the RUS national program office, the 48 state offices for USDA's Rural Development (formerly the Farmers Home Administration), and our website. Advice is also available from RUS General Field Representatives. Contact information for these representatives is available from the state offices for USDA's Rural Development and the national program office.

National Program Office

Robert Peters
Assistant Administrator, Telecommunications
Program
USDA
Room 4056 South Bldg., Stop 1590
Washington, DC 20250-1590
202-720-9554
Email: rpeters@rus.usda.gov

Internet

www.usda.gov/rus/dlml.htm#Menu2

Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) of the USDA administers this program created to enable farmers to perform emergency conservation measures to control wind erosion on farmlands, or to rehabilitate farmlands damaged by wind erosion, floods, hurricanes, or other natural disasters, and to carry out emergency water conservation or water enhancing measures during periods of severe drought.

The program offers cost-sharing assistance for carrying out conservation practices. Any person who is owner, landlord, tenant, or sharecropper on a farm or ranch, including associated groups, and bears a part of the cost of an approved conservation practice in a disaster area, is eligible to apply for cost-share conservation assistance. The amount of assistance ranges from \$50 to \$64,000 with \$2,681 being the average amount. Notification of assistance is given approximately two to three weeks from the time of application.

In FY 1995, as a result of natural disasters and carryover work from previous years, \$27,206,940 in cost-share and technical assistance was paid to farmers and ranchers in 39 states to help rehabilitate farmland damaged by drought, flood, hurricane, tornado, and other natural disasters.

Contact

Farmers should contact their local county FSA office after a natural disaster has occurred to determine eligibility for emergency cost-share assistance. Consult the local phone directory for location of the county FSA office.

National Program Office

Emergency Conservation Program
Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency, Ag Box 0520
Washington, DC 20013
202-720-6221

Farm*A*Syst and Home*A*Syst

The Farm Assessment System (Farm*A*Syst) is a voluntary program that helps farmers and rural residents protect surface and groundwater by identifying pollution risks on their properties. Farm*A*Syst materials lead you through a self-assessment to examine farm and ranch activities, structures, and possible water contamination; identify potential problems; and map out strategies which will correct problems and reduce risks. Home*A*Syst is a similar program designed for non-farm, rural home owners. A Spanish language version of Farm*A*Syst is also available.

Farm*A*Syst operates through programs in each state, providing farmers with materials, technical assistance, and training for evaluating potential environmental hazards on the farm. The Farm*A*Syst worksheets enable you to evaluate numerous aspects of your farm's operation which can be potential sources of pollution: the well condition; pesticide and fertilizer storage and handling; petroleum tanks; hazardous waste management; household wastewater; livestock yards and waste management; silage; milking center wastewater; and croplands, pastures, and woodlots.

Once risks are known, you can develop an action plan to reduce or eliminate potential problems. By comparing risk levels from different pollution sources you can deal with the greatest pollution risks first, as time and money allow. Farm*A*Syst can also help you to identify who in the community can help with technical assistance, facility designs, supplies and equipment, regulations, and in some cases, financial assistance.

This inter-agency program is supported by federal funding from USDA-CSREES, USDA-NRCS, and U.S. EPA. State programs charge a nominal fee to cover duplicating costs for materials (usually less than \$10.00).

Contact

If you have access to the Internet, check the Farm*A*Syst web page (below) to identify the contact person for your state. You can also call the national office to obtain the name and phone number of the appropriate contact person for your state.

National Program Office

Farm*A*Syst and Home*A*Syst
B142 Steenbock Library
550 Babcock Drive
Madison, WI 53706-1293
608-265-0024
E-Mail:armasyst@macc.wisc.edu or
homeasyst@macc.wisc.edu

Internet

<http://www.wisc.edu/farmasyst>

or

<http://www.wisc.edu/homeasyst>

National Center for Integrated Pest Management

The CIPM is located at the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at North Carolina State University. While some basic funding comes from the National Science Foundation, the majority of CIPM's budget, for grants and general operations, comes from membership funds provided by the industry partners such as: United Soybean Board, DuPont, Monsanto, Mycogen, and others.

The Center offers "seed" grants for novel research and extension projects in integrated pest management (IPM). Preproposals are restricted to work involving "food and fiber," production agriculture. The Center does not fund research on social issues, product-specific programs, or urban/turf IPM at this time. Priority topics for funding are established each year by the industry partners. These priorities, and additional information on CIPM, are made available to the public on the Center's web site (see contact information below).

Funding is limited to \$15,000/year. Most grants awarded range from \$5,000-10,000 each year. Grants are for a maximum of three years (with renewal based on results and funds availability). The total amount awarded by CIPM is between \$200-300,000 each calendar year. Land grant institutions are the primary target for these funds. On rare occasions a proposal from a nonprofit organization may be considered, particularly if the organization is collaborating with a land grant university.

Contact

More information on Center history, members, and recently funded projects can be found at the Virtual Center for IPM (see Internet/Website below) or by calling (919) 515-1648.

National Program Office

Dr. Ron Stinner, Director
NSF Center for IPM
1017 Main Campus Drive
Suite 1100
NCSU Centennial Campus
Raleigh, NC 27606

Internet

<http://ipmwww.ncsu.edu/cipm/>

National Sheep Industry Improvement Center

The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (Fair Act), under Title VII, Section 759 calls for the establishment of the National Sheep Industry Improvement Center. Funding for the Center is derived from a revolving fund initially funded at \$20 million. Additional funding up to a maximum of \$50 million may be appropriated over the next 10 years. Thereafter, the Center will have to become entirely supported by the sheep and goat industry.

The Center is managed by a nine-member (seven voting and 2 nonvoting members) board of directors. The voting members are appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture from nominees submitted by the sheep and goat industry. The nonvoting members are the Under Secretary of Agriculture for Rural Development and the Under Secretary of Agriculture for Research, Education, and Economics. The Board of Directors may use the revolving fund to make grants, intermediate and long-term loans, equity investments, contracts, or cooperative agreements. Funds may be used to participate with federal and state agencies, other public and private funding sources, and in regional efforts.

This is a new program and no specific projects have been carried out under this authority. The Cooperative Services Program of Rural Business-Cooperative Service, however, has a long history of providing technical assistance to agricultural cooperatives. The range of cooperatives served include those in the sheep and goat industry. Final rules are pending publication in the Federal Register. Initial funding for the Center on a revolving fund basis is \$20 million.

Contact

National Program Office

Thomas H. Stafford, Director
Cooperative Marketing Division
Cooperative Services,
Rural Business-Cooperative Services
Stop 3252, Room 4204 South Building
1400 Independence Ave S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-3252
202-690-0368
Email: Thomas.Stafford@usda.gov

Internet

[www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rbcds/html/
rbcdhome.htm](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rbcds/html/rbcdhome.htm)

OR

www.usda.gov/ams/tmdnop.htm

Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program Grants

Congress amended the Clean Water Act (CWA) in 1987 to establish the section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program because it recognized the need for greater federal leadership to help focus state and local nonpoint source efforts. Under section 319, states submit a draft grant application to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), including a draft work plan for use of 319 funds for the fiscal year. Funds can be used by the state to support a wide variety of activities including technical assistance, financial assistance, education, training, technology transfer, demonstration projects, and monitoring to assess the success of specific nonpoint source implementation projects. Although these federal funds are increasingly being channeled to states as block grants, local and regional organizations are encouraged to collaborate with state agencies in this program. The federal contribution may not exceed 60 percent of the costs of a project supported by these funds.

Contact

Contact the lead agency in your state that oversees nonpoint source pollution issues.

National Program Office

US-EPA; Nonpoint Source Control Branch (4503)
401 M Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20460

Internet

<http://www.epa.gov/OWOW/NPS/guide.html>

Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) and Veterinary Services (VS)

APHIS helps to facilitate agricultural trade for both importers and exporters. PPQ is responsible for ensuring that healthy seeds, plants, bulbs, timber, flowers, vegetables, fruits and a multitude of other agricultural commodities can be exported without risk to agriculture and natural resources. VS ensures that animals and animal products, such as semen and embryos, can be exported from this country without threatening animal health in their countries of destination.

PPQ provides phytosanitary inspection and certification for plants and plant products being shipped to foreign countries as well as exporters when required by a foreign country. The phytosanitary certificates verify that the products have been inspected and are pest and disease free. When U.S. goods arrive at a foreign nation and are denied entry, PPQ will try to negotiate with foreign plant health authorities on behalf of the U.S. exporter.

VS works closely with exporters for export of animals, birds, and animal products. For requirements on exporting animal products to foreign countries, exporters should contact their trading partners in the foreign country. VS will work with exporters to meet those requirements, both in examining the products and issuing certificates.

With the volume of certificates issued and because many countries have vastly different entry requirements for agricultural products, PPQ developed a data base to track the phytosanitary requirements for each country. The data base also lists the status of endangered plant species, the commodities that are not eligible to be exported to specific countries, any changes in other countries' entry requirements and identifies ports that are authorized to certify for export those endangered and threatened plants protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

VS has a data base called the International Regulation Retrieval System in Fort Collins, Colo., that lists the animal health requirements of other countries.

Contact

To obtain information or apply for a phytosanitary inspection and certification, contact your local federal or state plant regulatory office, or for general information contact:

USDA-APHIS-PPQ
Export Certification Unit, Program Support
4700 River Road, Unit 139
Riverdale, MD 20737-1228
301-734-8537

For permit applications and information about import and export requirements and user fees for animals, birds, and animal products, contact:

USDA-APHIS-VS
National Center for Import/Export
4700 River Road, Unit 40
Riverdale, MD 20737-1231
301-734-8364

National Program Office

Alfred Elder, Acting Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Room 302-E
Jamie L. Whitten Federal Building
Washington, D.C. 20250-3431
202-720-5601

Dr. Joan Arnoldi, Deputy Administrator
Veterinary Services
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Room 320-E
Jamie L. Whitten Federal Building
Washington, D.C. 20250-3491
202-720-5193

Internet

www.aphis.usda.gov

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA)

The National Park Service provides staff advisory assistance and counseling to projects which have established partnerships between government and citizens to increase the number of rivers and landscapes protected and trails established nationwide.

Projects should have clear, measurable objectives and must be designed to have a significant, cost-effective impact on an issue and lead to tangible conservation of significant resources. Each project must demonstrate cooperation among affected public agencies and private interests and have significant public involvement.

Private nonprofit organizations and federal, state and local government agencies are eligible for assistance. Proposals must demonstrate commitment of cost-sharing which may include donations of time, cash and services. Proposed assistance is generally for one to two years.

Contact

Applicants should contact their closest National Park Service System Support Offices to pursue this program. Addresses can be obtained through the Headquarters Office:

Assistant Director
National Center for Recreation and Conservation
Post Office Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013
202-343-3780

Rural Venture Capital Demonstration Program

The Rural Venture Capital Demonstration (Venture Capital) Program was created by the 1996 Farm Bill to use loan guarantees to attract venture capital to rural areas. However, this program's funding comes through the Rural Community Advancement Program (RCAP) for which no appropriations were provided in fiscal year 1997. As funding for RCAP, and therefore the Venture Capital program, may be included in subsequent years, regulations are being developed.

The Venture Capital program is intended to provide guarantees for each fiscal year to 10 community development venture capital organizations established to make equity investments in rural private businesses. Priority is to be given to organizations that have demonstrated experience in small business equity investment and community development finance, propose to serve low income communities, invest funds statewide or in a multi-county region, and propose to target job opportunities resulting from investments primarily to economically disadvantaged individuals. Under the program, the Secretary of USDA is authorized to guarantee up to 30 percent of the funds in a pool against loss, up to \$15 million, for a period of up to 10 years.

Contact

Monies for this program are distributed to each state and are administered by each state's USDA Rural Development Agency. Office phone numbers are available though the National Program Office number listed at right. Eligibility requirements and application procedures will vary by state.

Visit the website to determine whether this program is available and has been funded after fiscal year 1997.

National Program Office

Dwight Carmon, Division Director
Processing Division
USDA, Rural Business-Cooperative Service
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-0700
202-690-4100

Internet

www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rbcds/html/biloan.htm

USDA/CSREES' Small Farm Program

This program merged the former USDA Office for Small Scale Agriculture and the Small Farm Program of USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Services (CSREES). It provides information to farmers and others on small farm issues, including publications on issues ranging from a series called, "Getting Started in Farming" to a "Directory of State Extension Small Farm Contacts." It also has numerous fact sheets on growing a wide variety of specialty and other crops, publishes a newsletter called the Small Farm Digest, and has a Small Farm Toll-Free hotline, whose number is 1-800-583-3071.

The Small Farm Program also funds Land Grant Colleges to address issues important to small farmers in each state. It does this through formula (not competitive) funding for land grant institutions, in FY97 disbursing a total of \$2.75 million nationwide.

Contact

Dr. Denis Ebodaghe
USDA-CSREES
Stop 2220, Washington, D.C. 20250
202-401-4385; 202-401-5179 (fax)
e-mail: debodaghe@reeusda.gov

Internet

www.reeusda.gov/smalfarm

State Revolving Loan Fund (SRLF)

The State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) program provides capitalization grants to states for financing the costs of infrastructure needed to achieve or maintain compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), and to protect public health. Loans are made at interest rates lower than the market can offer to public water systems and can be used for the planning, design, and construction of projects to upgrade or replace water supply infrastructure, to correct inadequate health standards, to consolidate water supplies, and to purchase capacity in water systems. Purchase of land integral to the project can also be financed through the SRLF. A state may elect to use up to 31% of the capitalization grant for other eligible activities, including 4% for administration. States may also elect to transfer up to one-third of the capitalization grant to the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF). States must match at least 20% of the federal grant and may reserve up to 2% of their annual federal allotment to provide technical assistance to small systems (serving populations of 10,000 or fewer).

The 50 U.S. states and Puerto Rico are eligible to receive capitalization grants. The District of Columbia, Territories, and Indian tribes are eligible for direct grants from the program. Funds must be used for drinking water systems that are publicly and privately owned community drinking water systems and nonprofit non-community drinking water systems. Indian tribes and Alaska Native Villages are eligible to receive funding through state programs.

States should seek pre-application assistance from the appropriate EPA Regional Office. The state must prepare a plan for public comment on the intended uses of the funds.

Contact

Individuals and organizations seeking to provide input to state plans or be considered for participation in any aspect of a state's program should contact the appropriate state's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Administrator. For help in identifying this office in your state, contact:

Association for State Drinking Water
Administrators
1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-293-7655;
E-mail: asdwa@erols.org.

Internet

<http://www.asdwa.org>.

VII. General Information Sources

The Consumer Information Center and Catalog

The Consumer Information Center (CIC) was established in 1970 to help federal agencies and departments develop, promote, and distribute consumer information to the public.

The CIC publishes a quarterly Consumer Information Catalog which is distributed to millions of consumers. Each issue has descriptive listings of about 200 booklets from approximately 40 different federal departments and agencies. These publications cover everything from pesticides to wildlife conservation, health to housing, from buying cars to building careers, from food to federal benefits. Requests for publications are generally filled within ten working days, with total time for delivery usually within four weeks.

Contact

To get a free printed copy of the latest Consumer Information Catalog, send your name and address to: Consumer Information Catalog, Pueblo, Colo. 81009.

Internet

<http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/>

National Agricultural Library Information Resource Centers

Alternative Farming Systems Information Center

One of 10 information centers at the National Agricultural Library, AFSIC specializes in locating, collecting and providing information about sustainable and alternative agricultural systems, new and industrial crops, and alternative crops.

AFSIC information specialists will answer questions; provide access to books, reports, journal articles newsletters, etc.; provide references to experts or organizations in a given region; identify researchers and research projects within USDA; and furnish free bibliographies and reference briefs.

Contact

For more information, contact:

National Agricultural Library
Agricultural Research Service
AFSIC
U.S. Department of Agriculture
10301 Baltimore Ave., Room 304
Beltsville, MD 20705-2351
301-504-6559
afsic@nal.usda.gov

Internet

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic>

Rural Information Center

The Rural Information Center (RIC) is a joint project of the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education & Extension Service and the National Agricultural Library (NAL). RIC provides information and referral services to local government officials, community organizations, health professionals and organizations, rural electric and telephone cooperatives, libraries, businesses, and rural citizens working to maintain the vitality of America's rural areas. The Center combines the technical, subject-matter expertise of Extension's nationwide educational network with the information specialists and resources of the world's foremost agricultural library.

Contact

National Agricultural Library
10301 Baltimore Blvd. Room 304
Beltsville, MD 20705-2351
ric@nal.usda.gov

Internet

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric>

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE RURAL DEVELOPMENT STATE OFFICES

ALABAMA

USDA Rural Development State Office
Sterling Center, Suite 601
4121 Carmichael Road
Montgomery, AL 36106-3683
T: (334) 279-3400 F: (334) 279-3484

ALASKA

USDA Rural Development State Office
800 West Evergreen, Suite 201
Palmer, AK 99645
T: (907) 745-2176 F: (907) 745-5398

ARIZONA

USDA Rural Development State Office
3003 North Central Avenue, Suite 900
Phoenix, AZ 85012
T: (602) 280-8700 F: (602) 280-8770

ARKANSAS

USDA Rural Development State Office
700 West Capitol, P.O. Box 2778
Little Rock, AR 72203
T: (501) 324-6281 F: (501) 324-6346

CALIFORNIA

USDA Rural Development State Office
194 West Main Street, Suite F
Woodland, CA 95695-2915
T: (916) 668-2000 F: (916) 668-2055

COLORADO

USDA Rural Development State Office
655 Parfet Street, Room E-100
Lakewood, CO 80215
T: (303) 236-2801 F: (303) 236-2854

DELAWARE-MARYLAND

USDA Rural Development State Office
5201 South Dupont Hwy
P.O. Box 400
Camden, DE 19934-9998
T: (302) 697-4300 F: (302) 697-4390

FLORIDA

USDA Rural Development State Office
4440 NW 25th Place
P.O. Box 147010
Gainesville, FL 32614-7010
T: (352) 338-3400 F: (352) 338-3405

GEORGIA

USDA Rural Development State Office
Stephens Federal Building
355 E. Hancock Avenue
Athens, GA 30601
T: (706) 546-2162 F: (706) 546-2152

HAWAII

USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Room 311
154 Waianuenue Avenue
Hilo, HI 96720
T: (808) 933-3000 F: (808) 933-6901

IDAHO

USDA Rural Development State Office
3232 Elder Street
Boise, ID 83705
T: (208) 378-5600 F: (208) 378-5643

ILLINOIS

USDA Rural Development State Office
Illini Plaza, Suite 103
1817 South Neil Street
Champaign, IL 61820
T: (217) 398-5235 F: (217) 398-5337

INDIANA

USDA Rural Development State Office
5975 Lakeside Boulevard
Indianapolis, IN 46278
T: (317) 290-3100 F: (317) 290-3095

IOWA

USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Room 873
210 Walnut Street
Des Moines, IA 50309
T: (515) 284-4663 F: (515) 284-4859

KANSAS

USDA Rural Development State Office
1200 SW Executive Drive
P.O. Box 4653
Topeka, KS 66604
T: (913) 271-2700 F: (913) 271-2708

KENTUCKY

USDA Rural Development State Office
771 Corporate Drive, Suite 200
Lexington, KY 40503
T: (606) 224-7300 F: (606) 224-7340

LOUISIANA

USDA Rural Development State Office
3727 Government Street
Alexandria, LA 71302
T: (318) 473-7920 F: (318) 473-7829

MAINE

USDA Rural Development State Office
444 Stillwater Avenue, Suite 2
P.O. Box 405
Bangor, ME 04402-0405
T: (207) 990-9106 F: (207) 990-9165

MASS/RI/CONN

USDA Rural Development State Office
451 West Street
Amherst, MA 01002
T: (413) 253-4300 F: (413) 253-4347

MICHIGAN

USDA Rural Development State Office
3001 Coolidge Road, Suite 200
East Lansing, MI 48823
T: (517) 337-6635 F: (517) 337-6913

MINNESOTA

USDA Rural Development State Office
410 AgriBank Building
375 Jackson Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
T: (612) 290-3842 F: (612) 290-3085

MISSISSIPPI

USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Suite 831
100 West Capitol Street
Jackson, MS 39269
T: (601) 965-4316 F: (601) 965-5384

MISSOURI

USDA Rural Development State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Parkade Center, Suite 235
Columbia, MO 65203
T: (573) 876-0976 F: (573) 876-0977

MONTANA

USDA Rural Development State Office
Unit 1, Suite B
900 Technology Boulevard
Bozeman, MT 59715
T: (406) 585-2580 F: (406) 585-2565

NEBRASKA

USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Room 308
100 Centennial Mall N
Lincoln, NE 68508
T: (402) 437-5551 F: (402) 437-5408

NEVADA

USDA Rural Development State Office
1390 South Curry Street
Carson City, NV 89703-5405
T: (702) 887-1222 F: (702) 885-0841

NEW MEXICO

USDA Rural Development State Office
6200 Jefferson Street, Room 255
Albuquerque, NM 87109
T: (505) 761-4950 F: (505) 761-4976

NEW JERSEY

USDA Rural Development State Office
Tarnsfield Plaza, Suite 22
790 Woodlane Road
Mt. Holly, NJ 08060
T: (609) 265-3600 F: (609) 265-3651

NEW YORK

USDA Rural Development State Office
The Galleries of Syracuse
441 South Salina Street
Syracuse, NY 13202
T: (315) 477-6400 F: (315) 477-6438

NORTH CAROLINA

USDA Rural Development State Office
4405 Bland Road, Suite 260
Raleigh, NC 27609
T: (919) 873-2000 F: (919) 873-2076

NORTH DAKOTA

USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Room 208
220 East Rosser, P.O. Box 1737
Bismarck, ND 58502
T: (701) 250-4781 F: (701) 250-4670

OHIO

USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Room 507
200 North High Street
Columbus, OH 43215
T: (614) 469-5606 F: (614) 469-5802

OKLAHOMA

USDA Rural Development State Office
100 USDA, Suite 108
Stillwater, OK 74074
T: (405) 742-1000 F: (405) 742-1005

OREGON

USDA Rural Development State Office
101 SW Main Street, Suite 1410
Portland, OR 97204-2333
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PENNSYLVANIA

USDA Rural Development State Office
1 Credit Union Place, Suite 330
Harrisburg, PA 17110-2996
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PUERTO RICO

USDA Rural Development State Office
New San Juan Office Building, Rm. 501
159 Carlos E. Chardon Street
Hato Rey, PR 00918-5481
T: (809) 766-5095 F: (809) 766-5844

SOUTH CAROLINA

USDA Rural Development State Office
Strom Thurmond Federal Building
1835 Assembly Street, Room 1007
Columbia, SC 29201
T: (803) 765-5163 F: (803) 765-5633

SOUTH DAKOTA

USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Room 308
200 4th Street SW
Huron, SD 57350
T: (605) 352-1100 F: (605) 352-1146

TENNESSEE

USDA Rural Development State Office
3322 West End Avenue, Suite 300
Nashville, TN 37203-1071
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TEXAS

USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Suite 102
101 South Main
Temple, TX 76501
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UTAH

USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Rm. 5438
125 South State Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84138
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VERMONT/NH/VI

USDA Rural Development State Office
City Center, 3rd Floor, 89 Main Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
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VIRGINIA

USDA Rural Development State Office
Culpeper Building, Suite 238
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Richmond, VA 23229
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WASHINGTON

USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Room 319
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WEST VIRGINIA

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